ADVICE
TO
CHILDREN.

BY

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ADVICE TO CHILDREN.

THERE is ſcarce any thing wherein all Nations, and Men of all Religions, do more agree, than in the Common Duties of Children to their Parents: Neither is there any thing that tends more to the comfort and happineſs, the beauty and ſtrength of Society, than for Children to perform all thoſe Duties which they owe to their Parents. And yet how ſad is it to think, that a great many Children, who have not only all the advantages which Natural Religion affords, but likewiſe the aſſiſtance of Divine Revelation, do nevertheleſs

carry themſelves in that manner towards their Parents, as if they either underſtood nothing of their Duty, or were moſt prodigiouſly perverſe, and reſolved to *rebel againſt the Light*, to trample upon all the Principles both of Natural and Revealed Religion.

The Deſign of this ſhort Treatiſe is to ſhew what the Duties of Children are towards their Parents, and to ſuggeſt ſome Conſiderations to excite them to do their Duty.

1. *Duty of Children, to honour their Parents: and how they are to honour them.*

Firſt, Children are bound to honour their Parents; which imports, *Firſt*, That they ſhould entertain reſpectful and reverend thoughts of them, as being under God the Authors of their Life and Being; they muſt not think ſlightingly, and undervaluingly of their Parents, whatever be their weakneſſes and Imperfections: They ought to hate and abhor their Vices, every thing in them that is evil, diſhonourable to God, and contrary to his Laws and Commandments; but ſtill they ought to love and

and honour their Persons: And if at any time disrespectful and irreverend thoughts arise in their minds, they ought to check them, to accuse and be angry with themselves for them; and to call to mind what God hath commanded them to do, when he saith, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* Ex. 20. 12.

Secondly, This imports that they ought to express their inward Reverence and esteem by all the outward marks and demonstrations thereof, in their Words and Deeds, their looks and gestures; these things are the Picture of the Mind, they ordinarily represent the temper and dispostion thereof; so that if there be any thing of real esteem and regard towards any body in the heart, it will discover it self by some of those outward expressions. When *Joseph* came before his Father, with his two Sons, he did not omit the utmost respect, tho' at that time *Jacob* was blind with Age, and could not see what *Joseph* did. The Text saith, *He bowed himself with his Face to the Earth*, Gen. 48. 12.

We ſee likewiſe how *Solomon* carried himſelf towards his Mother, 1 *Kings* 2. 19. *Bathſheba went unto King Solomon to ſpeak unto him for Adonijah: And the King roſe up to meet her, and bowed himſelf unto her, and ſate down on his Throne, and cauſed a ſeat to be ſet for the King's Mother, and ſhe ſate on his right hand.* Children are more apt to carry themſelves irreverently and ſlightingly towards their Mother, which is the reaſon, as ſome think, that ſhe is ſet down firſt, Lev. 19. 3. *Ye ſhall fear every Man his Mother, and his Father.*

Thirdly, This imports that they ought to cover the infirmities and weakneſſes, the imperfections and indiſcretions of their Parents; to do as *Shem* and *Japhet* did, *Gen.* 9. 23. when *Noah* their Father was drunken, and was uncovered within his Tent, *They took a garment, and laid it upon both their ſhoulders, and went backwards, and covered the nakedneſs of their Father, and their faces were backward, and they ſaw not their Father's nakedneſs.*

The Bleſſings promiſed to *Shem* and *Japhet*, and to their Poſterity, upon this occaſion,

occaſion, ſhew how acceptable what they did was unto God.

Children are not to publiſh the faults and follies of their Parents; but ought to conceal them, all that they can. However, there are two things very conſiſtent with this Duty: *Firſt*, Children may and ought to do all that they can, by their private, modeſt, and humble Advice, to reclaim their Parents from their ſinful practices. *Secondly*, if they find it not ſo fit for them immediately to adviſe their Parents; or if what they ſay hath not the deſigned effect, then they may recommend this charitable Office to the care of ſome other body, who is a wiſe and kind, a pious and ſerious Friend, who may have ſome more influence than themſelves towards the reclaiming their Parents. This is the greateſt expreſſion of true kindneſs, honour, and reſpect to them, when their Chlidren ſincerely endeavour, in the diſcreeteſt manner, to be the happy inſtruments of their Converſion and Reformation, of turning them from Satan unto God: This is to be, in ſome ſort, the Fathers in Chriſt, to thoſe who are their Parents by Nature. O how happy are

the Parents of such worthy Children! How may they rejoyce and bless God, who hath bestowed on them so great a Blessing?

The Poverty of Parents does not exempt Children from this Duty.

As to the abovementioned Instances of Honour and Respect due from Children to their Parents, 'tis to be remembred, that no alteration of the outward Estate and Circumstances of Parents, does exempt Children from their Obligation to pay them all manner of Respect. And tho' Children be raised to greater Honours and Dignities than their Parents, yet they must still pay them all that regard and observance that is due to the Authors of their Being. How great an Example of this Filial Respect, was *Joseph*: When he was raised to the greatest Power and Honour that the King of *Egypt* could confer upon him, yet still he retained a due Sense of his Obligation to Honour his Aged Father, his Mother then being Dead: He was not ashamed to own him before *Pharaoh*, tho' his Trade and Employment in the World was such as was an Abomination to the *Egyptians*. See, *Gen.* 46. 31, 32. *&c.*

And

And, *Ch.* 47. 1, 2. *&c.* In like manner we see that *David*, after he was Anointed to be King, did not forget his Duty towards his Poor Distressed Parents, he was not ashamed to own them before the King of *Moab*; he brought them before him, and recommended them to him, 1 *Sam.* 22. 3, 4.

Against those who dishonour their Parents.

If Children are thus obliged to Honour their Parents; what shall be said of those who dishonour, despise, and slight them, all that ever they can; who undervalue them in their thoughts; who speak of them with great contempt and disdain; who speak to them with great insolence; who mock and scorn them; who laugh at them, and make mouths at them, and point at them with the finger; who reproach and revile them; who break indecent jests upon them; who make them the Objects of their sport and pastime; who take pleasure in publishing their weaknesses and indiscretions, that others also may laugh at them, and despise them; who, when their Parents grow old and poor, or when themselves come to have more Wealth and Honour in the World

than their Parents have, do thenceforth turn their backs upon their poor Parents, are ashamed to own them, and will not any longer take notice of them?

How dreadful and terrible are the Curses and Judgments, which God hath in store against such wretched Children? Deut. 27. 16. *Cursed be he that setteth light by his Father or his Mother.* Prov. 30. 17. *The Eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother; the Ravens of the vallies shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it.* That is, he who is a mocker and scorner of his Parents, who despises and slights them, shall die a shameful death, and remain unburied, and shall be exposed to the Birds and Beasts of prey, to be eaten of them. It does not follow from hence, that all perverse wretched Children come to such a shameful and untimely end: Only it shews what oftimes happeneth, and is very usual, to wit, that such mockers and despisers of Parents are punished remarkably by the Justice of God in this World, and are made Examples to all others, who will open their Eyes to consider the hand of God against such ungodly Children.

As for Inſtances of the Divine Juſtice againſt Mockers of Parents, all Ages and Countries are full of them. *Cham* was made an Example of this, *Gen.* 9. 22, 24, 25. *And Cham the Father of Canaan ſaw the nakedneſs of his Father, and told his two brethren without: And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger ſon had done unto him. And he ſaid, Curſed be Canaan; a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren.* In which words, the, *Canaan* the Son of *Cham* is only mentioned, yet *Cham* is not exempted from the Curſe; his puniſhment is hereby made ſo much the greater, becauſe he is not only pronounced accurſed in his own perſon (which is neceſſarily to be ſuppoſed, he having committed the ſin which cauſed the Curſe) but alſo in his Poſterity, which could not but increaſe mightily his grief, and make his puniſhment lye more heavy upon him.

Ezekiel reckons this Sin, of contemning and diſhonouring Parents, as one great cauſe of the dreadful Judgments which God inflicted upon the *Jews*, *Ch.* 22. 7. *In ye have they ſet Light by Father and Mother.*

2. *Duty,*

2. *Duty, to obey their Parents, and to hearken to their Instructions.*

Secondly, Children are to obey their Parents, to do what they bid them. See this in the Example of *Joseph*, when *Jacob* sent him to his Brethren, *Gen.* 37. 13, 14. *And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them: And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again: so he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.*

See likewise the Example of *David*, 1 Sam. 17. 17, 18, 20. *Jesse said unto David his Son, take now for thy Brethren an Ephah of this parched Corn, and these Ten Loaves, and run to the Camp to thy Brethren: And carry these Ten Cheeses unto the Captain of their Thousand, and look how thy Brethren fare, and take their pledge. And* David *arose early in the Morning, and left the Sheep with a Keeper, and took, and went as Jesse had Commanded him*, &c.

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The Commands of Parents are either about the ſame things which God hath commanded, or they are about things indifferent, or about things unlawful. *Firſt*, if they are about the ſame things which God hath commanded, they are ſo much the more to be obeyed; as being the will and pleaſure both of their Father in Heaven, and of their earthly Parents. In this caſe the obligation to obedience is double, *Eph.* 6. 1. *Children*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right*, that is, it is agreeable to all Law, to the Law of God, of Nature, and of Nations; 'Tis that which is due to the place of Parents; 'Tis their right to be obeyed by their Children.

Secondly, If their Parents Commands are about things indifferent, that is, which are neither commanded, nor forbidden by God, Children are likewiſe to obey them: God hath made it their Duty ſo to do, *Col.* 3. 20. *Children obey your Parents in all things; for this is well pleaſing unto the Lord.* * This Obedience is very acceptable to him; he takes great pleaſure

* *Agreeable to this was the Senſe of wiſe Heathens.* See A. Gell. l. 2. c. 7.

and

and delight in it, to ſee thoſe obeyed and ſubmitted to, whom he hath appointed to be, as it were, in his own ſtead; whom he hath cloathed with ſome beams of Divine Power; whom, with relation to their Children, he hath made, in ſome ſenſe, ſacred perſons; whoſe Will ought to be a Law unto them, tho' only *in the Lord*. For, *Thirdly*, if the thing commanded be plainly unlawful, they are to refuſe compliance therewith; becauſe they are bound *to obey God rather than Man*, rather than Father or Mother, rather than all the World: In this caſe they ought to hearken to what our Saviour ſaith, *Luk.* 14. 26. *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother*, &c. *he cannot be my Diſciple.* In which Words, Our Saviour is far from encouraging Children to hate, or to diſobey their Parents; for we ſee how zealouſly he vindicates the Authority of Parents upon other occaſions. But his Deſign, is, to teach Children, when the Will of God and the Will of their Parents ſtand in Competition, that then they ought always to give the preference to the Divine Will, and to chuſe rather to incur the diſpleaſure

ſure of their Earthly Parents, than to offend and provoke their Heavenly Father. They ought to conſider, their Obligations to God are much greater than to their Parents; he is the Maker both of them, and of their Parents; They live by his Bounty; the Earth they tread on is his; the Air they breathe in, the Heavens that cover them, the Food they eat, the Water they drink, the Garments that Cloath them, and all other things which they enjoy for their benefit and comfort in the World, are the Lord's: He is their great Maſter, who appoints them their buſineſs in the World, and aſſures them of a reward; He alſo will reckon with them, and either reward, or puniſh them, according to their Works; and therefore his Commands are to be preferred to thoſe of all others.

But even in this caſe, Children are to expreſs, in their very denial and refuſal of obedience, all that Honour and Reſpect to their Parents, that's poſſible; that they may ſee it is not ſtubbornneſs, but the fear of God, which makes them diſobey. By this means Parents may perhaps be convinced, and made ſenſible of their Sin, and prevailed

ed with to ſhun thoſe evil things, which they ſee their very Children do ſo much hate and abhor, and wherein they refuſe to obey.

Againſt ſtubborn and diſobedient Children.

If Children are thus bound by the Laws of Heaven, to obey their Parents; what ſhall be ſaid of thoſe, who make no account of their Parents Commands, but ſet at naught all their Admonitions and Counſels; who will not follow their Directions, and be governed by them for their own good; but do follow their own humour and fancy, and the Examples and Cuſtoms of others like themſelves? They think themſelves too wiſe to need Inſtruction, and are ready to ſay, That they ſhould do a great deal better, if their Parents would let them alone, let them take their own way in every thing, and never trouble their Heads about them. So little regard have ſome to what their Parents ſay to them, That they have not patience to hear them ſpeak, but run out of their preſence when they begin to talk ſeriouſly to them; or if they are in an humour to hear them a little while, yet they hear as if they heard not, they

they trample upon all they ſay, and never lay it to Heart. What a ſad mark is this of approaching ruine, and of heavy Judgments, which hang over the heads of ſuch ungodly Children, as you may ſee in the Sons of *Ely*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. of whom it is ſaid, that *they hearkened not unto the voice of their Father, becauſe the Lord would ſlay them.*

By the Law of *Moſes*, the ſtubborn Son was to be put to death, *Deut.* 21. 18, 19, 20, 21. *If a man have a ſtubborn and rebellious ſon, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chaſtened him, will not hearken unto them: Then ſhall his father and mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and unto the gate of his place: And they ſhall ſay unto the Elders of his City, This our ſon is ſtubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice: He is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his City ſhall ſtone him with ſtones, that he die: ſo ſhalt thou put evil away from among you, and all Iſrael ſhall hear and fear.*

In ancient times, in moſt Countries, Parents had an abſolute power over their

their Children, to punish them as they thought good, for their disobedience and other faults: And when amongst the *Romans* they lessened this power, yet they did it at first only in part; The Father was enjoyned to present his disobedient Child to the Judge, that he might be punished; and the Judge was to pronounce such a Sentence as the Father thought fit. This came somewhat near the Law of *Moses*. By which it appears, what the sense of Mankind was concerning the exceeding greatness of the crime of stubbornness and disobedience in Children to Parents.

3. *Duty of Children, to be Faithful to their Parents, and not to dispose of their Goods without their Consent.*

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3*dly*. They ought Faithfully to serve their Parents, to be careful to promote their Temporal Welfare and Happiness, and to be as useful and helpful to them in their Worldly Concerns, as is possible. Not only Duty, but Interest should

ſhould excite Children to do this; for, their Happineſs and Proſperity does in great meaſure depend upon that of their Parents. 'Tis not often that Children thrive and flouriſh in the World, when their Parents are reduced to Miſery and Poverty. And therefore, a regard to their own Intereſt and Advantage, ought to make them careful to do their Parents the beſt Service that is in their power.

But beſides this, Gratitude ought to prevail with Children, faithfully to ſerve their Parents, and to be uſeful to them, ſo far as they can. Are Parents the Authors of their Life and Being? Have they nouriſhed and ſuſtained them for ſo many Years? Have they been at ſo much pains and coſt, and endured ſo much pain and travel to bring them up, and to make them capable to do ſome Service in the World? And ſhall not they reckon it their Happineſs and Honour, to have an opportunity to ſerve them, and to be helpful to them, and by their care and pains, and faithfulneſs towards them, to witneſs a due ſenſe of Gratitude, for all that they not only have done, but endured alſo for them, and that

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for a great many Years, when they could not do any thing for themſelves? The conſideration of theſe things, cannot but be of great force with all Ingenuous minds.

Againſt unfaithful and treacherous Children.

But, alas! How far are a great many Children from doing this Duty to their Parents? Inſtead of doing them faithful Service, they prove falſe and treacherous to them; inſtead of being careful of thoſe things they entruſt them with, they cheat and deceive them; they rob them; they diſpoſe of their Goods without their knowledge and approbation; they make uſe of them to ſerve their Vanity and Folly, and to gratifie their Wild and Youthful Inclinations: Yea, and how apt are ſome, to glory in this, as if they had done a very brave and worthy action, when they have had the good Fortune, as they reckon it, to defraud their poor Parents?

As Children, when they are diſpoſed to rob their Parents, are of all Thieves the moſt dangerous, being in their Parents Boſom, and thereby having opportunity to cheat them the more

more ſucceſsfully; ſo their crime is the moſt heinous in its kind, 'tis attended with very aggravating Circumſtances; 'tis ſo great, that there is no name bad enough to expreſs it by, and to repreſent it in all its deformity. How ſenſible was *Jacob* of this, when he was purſued by *Laban* his unrighteous Father-in-Law, and accuſed by him of having ſtoln his Idols? *With whomſoever*, ſays he to *Laban*, *thou findeſt them, let him not live*, Gen. 31. 32. We ſee what a ſevere Cenſure the wiſe Man paſſeth on ſuch Perſons, *Prov.* 28. 24. *Whoſo robbeth his Father and his Mother, and ſaith, It is no Tranſgreſſion, the ſame is a Companion of a Deſtroyer*; that is, he is to be look'd on, as no better than one of thoſe who rob and murder on the High-Way, as a Man deſperately wicked, who is diſpoſed to act any ſort of Villany and Impiety, who will ſtick at nothing in purſuit of his mad and wretched deſigns, that may gratifie his Luſts and Paſſions.

4. *Duty*,

4. *Duty of Children, to be determined by their Parents as to their Calling.*

4*thly*. They are to be determined by them, as to their Calling and Employment, if it be an honeſt and lawful one. Their Parents are to be ſuppoſed ordinarily more wiſe and prudent to chuſe for them, than they are to chuſe a Trade for themſelves: They have more experience, and know the World better than their Children do; and no doubt, they have kindneſs enough for them to wiſh them well, and to deſign their advantage, and not to preſs them to any Trade or way of Life, which they believe is inconvenient, and like to be hurtful to them: But if Parents ſhould be miſtaken, as to the fitneſs of the Employment, to which they deſign their Children; and ſuppoſing the Children to be ſenſible of the great inconveniences thereof, which the Parents, through prejudices and partialities, do not ſee; in this caſe Children may, with all due modeſty, meekneſs, and humility, repreſent to their Parents what their thoughts are, and tell them what objections they have

have againſt ſuch a Calling; that their Parents may be prevailed upon, by their Reaſons, to alter their reſolutions: or if they be not ſo fit themſelves to diſcourſe their Parents upon ſuch a ſubject, they may do it by ſome wiſe and diſcreet Friends. And if, after all, Parents be wilful in their intention and deſign; Children are not, upon the account of uncertain, or probable inconveniences, to oppoſe themſelves to the Will of their Parents; they ought to ſubmit themſelves to their Judgment, if the Trade, or manner of Life, to which they deſign them, be not diſhoneſt and unlawful; for then there is no farther queſtion to be made; the caſe is clear: The Will of God is always to be preferred to the Will of Man. *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me*, ſaith Chriſt, *is not worthy of me*, Matth. 10. 37. But if there be nothing of diſhoneſty or unlawfulneſs in ſuch an Employment, they are to enter upon it with all the chearfulneſs that's poſſible; leaving all events unto God. It will afford great peace and comfort to their minds, whatever afterwards falls out, when they conſider, that they did what was their Du-

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ty to do; they ſubmitted their own opinion to the Judgment of their Parents, whom God hath commanded them to obey. Whatever may be their temporal loſs, they are ſure of ſpiritual gain. God will plentifully reward their humble obedience, and ready compliance with the Will of their earthly Parents.

Againſt Children who neglect this Duty.

From what hath been ſaid on this Head, we may ſee how much they are to be blamed, who are ſo far from being determined by their Parents, in the way and manner of their living in the World, that they either wholly give up themſelves to idleneſs, and waſte their time in vain and fooliſh Company; or they chuſe ſome way of living, that is either diſhoneſt, or very inconvenient for them in many regards; or if they comply with their Parents, ſo far as to enter upon ſome honeſt way of living, yet they do not keep at it, but leave it, and become Prodigals; they ſpend their ſubſtance in riotous living; they waſte and conſume what their Parents beſtow upon them, in drinking, gaming, and whoring, and ſuch like extravagancies,

gancies, whereby as they occasion a great deal of sorrow and grief to their Parents, so they bring upon themselves sudden Destruction.

5. *Duty, not to suffer themselves to be bestowed in Marriage against their Parents Will.*

5*thly*. As to their Marriage, they are not to suffer themselves to be bestowed, without their Parents consent, in whom there is a right invested to dispose of their Children in Marriage in due time, as appears from *Deut.* 7. 3. *Neither shalt thou make Marriages with them:* (to wit, with the seven Nations of *Canaan*) *Thy Daughter thou shalt not give unto his Son; nor his Daughter shalt thou take unto thy Son.* And, 1 *Cor.* 7. 36, 37, 38. the Apostle *Paul* does very positively assert this power of Parents, to dispose of their Children in Marriage, when they see it fit and needful so to do.

We see how dutifully *Samson* carried himself towards his Parents in this matter, *Judg.* 14. 1, 2. *And* Samson *went down to* Timnath, *and saw a Woman in* Timnath, *and he came up and told*

told his Father and his Mother, and said, I have seen a Woman in Timnath *of the Daughters of the Philistins, now therefore get her for me to Wife.* We see what *Isaac* gave his Son *Jacob* in charge, when he was to go to *Haran*, Gen. 28. 1, 2. *Thou shalt not take a Wife of the Daughters of* Canaan: *Arise, go to* Padan-Aram, *to the House of* Bethuel *thy Mother's Father, and take thee a Wife from thence of the Daughters of* Laban, *thy Mother's Brother.* In like manner *Abraham* directs his Servant what Wife to chuse for his Son *Isaac*, Gen. 24. 3, 4. *Thou shalt not take a Wife unto my Son of the Daughters of the* Canaanites, *but thou shalt go unto my Country, and unto my Kindred, and take a Wife unto my Son* Isaac. And of *Ishmael* it is said, *Gen.* 21. 21. That *his Mother*, Hagar, *took him a Wife.*

How very just and reasonable is it, that they who are under God, the causes of their life and being in the World, whose Goods and Possession Children are, should be acknowledged and advised with by them, and depended on in the settling of themselves in the World, in such a state of Life, which will

will prove either the foundation of great happineſs or of great miſery? To give themſelves away, without their Parents Conſent, is a kind of theft; it is to invade the right of others; to rob them of that which God hath given them; for, Children are not their own, they are the Goods and Poſſeſſion of Parents, to whom God hath given them as an *Inheritance*, *Pſal.* 127. 3. and therefore Children have no more power to diſpoſe of themſelves, than to diſpoſe of their Parents Goods without their conſent.

We ſee how great the Power of Parents was, by the Law of *Moſes*, *Numb.* 30. 3, 4, 5. To diſanul the raſh Vows of their Children before Marriage. *If a Woman alſo vow a Vow unto the Lord, and bind her ſelf by a Bond, being in her Father's Houſe, in her youth, and her Father hear her Vow and her Bond, wherewith ſhe hath bound her Soul, and her Father ſhall hold his peace at her: Then all her Vows ſhall ſtand, and every Bond wherewith ſhe hath bound her Soul, ſhall ſtand: But if her Father diſallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her Vows, or of her*

Bonds, wherewith she hath bound her Soul, shall stand: And the Lord shall forgive her, because her Father disallowed her. Now if it be thus in a Father's power, to disanul his Daughter's rash Vow which she made to God, how much more may we reckon it in his Power, to disanul her rash and indiscreet promise made to Man, of bestowing her self without her Parents allowance? Can there be any thing more unjust, more unkind, more unthankful, and more unnatural, than for Children, who have been brought up, nourished, and cherished by their Parents, for whom all their care and pains have been bestowed, to dispose of themselves in the most important affair of their lives, without their knowledge, or against their Will? What a grief and trouble of heart must this needs be to their poor Parents? As we see it was to *Isaac* and *Rebekah*, *Gen.* 26. 34, 35. *And* Esau *was forty years old when he took to Wife* Judith, *the daughter of* Beeri *the* Hittite, *and* Bashemath, *the daughter of* Elon *the* Hittite, *which were a grief of mind to* Isaac, *and to* Rebekah. As to such undutiful Children, who do thus bestow themselves against their Parents

Parents will and consent, it is very remarkable, that they seldom live happily and comfortably; they bring upon themselves very often a great deal of sorrow and trouble, lasting Misery and Woe: They live to eat the fruit of their foolish doings; and wish, when it is to little purpose, that they had never done so mad and wicked a thing.

6. *Duty, to submit to their Parents Reproofs and Chastenings.*

6thly. They are meekly and patiently to submit to their Reproofs, to their Chastenings and Corrections. It is a Power that God hath given Parents over their Children, to correct and chasten them for their Faults: This is necessary for Childrens good; and therefore, when Parents do correct them, they ought not to be angry with them, or grumble at their severity which they use for reforming of them; much less are they to resist and rebel against them. *Heb.* 12. 9. *We have had Fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them Reverence.*

Yea, tho' Parents ſometimes exceed the bounds of Prudence and Diſcretion in chaſtiſing their Children, tho' they indulge a little to their own Paſſion; yet Children are bound patiently to bear and ſuffer their Corrections: They are not to fly out into indecent and irreverent words and actions, but with all the ſubmiſſion and reſpect that's poſſible, ought to endeavour to mitigate the wrath and paſſion of their angry Parents; and afterwards they are to ſtudy all that ever they can, to prevent their anger and diſpleaſure, by a moſt humble, reverend, and dutiful carriage.

Againſt Rebellious Children.

How much may this ſerve to reprove thoſe, who are ſo far from taking in good part their Parents correcting and chaſtening of them, that they refuſe to ſubmit thereto? They reſiſt them, and rebel againſt them. Can there be any thing more unnatural and monſtrous, than to ſee thoſe who owe their being to their Parents; who have been brought up by them; who have met with ſo many teſtimonies of a tender care, and of

of great kindneſs; to riſe up againſt them? To fly into the faces of thoſe who are the Authors of their being? to lift up their hand againſt them? This is a Sin of ſo crying a Nature, that he who was guilty thereof, was to be put to Death, by the Law of *Moſes*, Exod. 21. 15. *He that ſmiteth his Father or his Mother, ſhall be ſurely put to Death.* So ſenſible were ſome amongſt the very Heathens of the greatneſs of this Sin, that to ſhew their abhorrence of it, they were wont to puniſh thoſe who were Guilty of it, in the following manner; They ſewed them in a Sack with a Dog, Cat, Viper and Ape, and ſo drown'd them all together. Hereby they ſingnified, that ſuch Perſons were not any longer to be accounted Men, or the Children of Men, but were to be reckoned with the vileſt and baſeſt of Beaſts and Vermine, and in that Quality were to be caſt out of the ſight of all living.

How greatly does it aggravate this Sin, when Children have met with no ſevere, nor unmerciful dealing from their Parents? But have been treated by them, with all that gentleneſs and

kindneſs that was poſſible. And yet for ſuch Children to riſe up againſt their Parents, is a Crime of ſo black a Nature, that it is no wonder if the hand of God appear againſt them for it, in a very ſignal manner; as it did in the caſe of *Abſalom*, for whom his Father *David* had ſo great a fondneſs: This unthankful and unnatural Son roſe up againſt him, and endeavoured by force and violence to pull him from the Throne, and to uſurp the Royal Dignity. See how the hand of God appeared againſt him, 2 *Sam.* 18. 9. *And* Abſalom *met the Servants of* David; *and* Abſalom *rode upon a Mule, and the Mule went under the thick Boughs of a great Oak, and his Head caught hold of the Oak, and he was taken up between the Heaven and the Earth, and the Mule that was under him went away.* And, ver. 14. it is ſaid, that Joab *took three darts in his hand, and thruſt them through the heart of* Abſalom, *while he was yet alive in the midſt of the Oak.* And, ver. 15. *Ten young Men that bare* Joab's *Armour, compaſſed about, and ſmote* Abſalom, *and ſlew him.* And, ver. 17. *They took* Abſalom *and caſt him into a great Pit in the Wood, and laid a very great heap of Stones upon him.* This

was

was done as a lasting Monument of *Absalom*'s sin and shame, and of God's righteous Judgment upon him.

Duty, to love their Parents, and how they are to express their Love.

Fifthly, Children ought to love their Parents; and to express it by all those Offices, which are in their Power to do for them; by serving them readily; by studying ways how to make them well pleased: by sympathizing with them in all their troubles; by assisting them, and doing all they can to make their Lives joyful and comfortable; by shunning every thing that may grieve them, or make them uneasie: They ought to refuse no labour, nor pains to do them service, especially when they are sick and weak, oppressed with the Burden of Old Age, or poor and indigent, under any sort of necessity whatsoever; then ought Children to be very ready to help them, to comfort and to encourage them, to do what in them lies to make their lives easie to them, and to lighten their Burdens. This is called, 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. *A shewing Piety at home.* It is an act of Religion and Worship, which

God is well pleaſed with. We ſee how *Joſeph* nouriſhed his Father and his Brethren, and all his Fathers Houſhold with Bread, *Gen.* 47. 12. How worthy of Praiſe was that Excellent Moabiteſs *Ruth*, who not only gleaned for her poor Mother-in-Law *Naomi*, but did alſo, when Food was given her by *Boaz* for her own Refreſhment, reſerve part of it, and give it to her Mother. See *Ruth* 2. 18.

It was an old Roman Law *. *Let Children relieve their Parents or be put in Priſon.* Which ſheweth what was the Senſe of that wiſe People, concerning this Important Duty of Children towards their Parents; they lookt upon them as unworthy of Liberty to converſe amongſt Men, and to enjoy the common Priviledges of Society, who were ſo far void of Humanity, as not to relieve and aſſiſt their poor Parents. 'Twas likewiſe an Athenian Law, * That *if any did not relieve their Parents, they ſhould be eſteem'd baſe and ignoble.*

* *Senec. Controv. l.* 1. *Cont.* 1. 7. *and* 19.

* *Diog. Laert. in Solone.*

How many Examples have there been amongſt the Heathens, of Eminent Pi-

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The like inſtance we meet with in the ſame Author, of a worthy Roman Daughter, who did in the ſame manner preſerve her Mother in Priſon, being Condemned to dye. When the Keeper of the Priſon, to whom the charge of putting her to Death was committed, found after ſome time, that her Daughter kept her alive by giving her ſuck, he was ſo affected with the greatneſs of the Daughter's Compaſſion and Tenderneſs to her Mother, that he made it known to thoſe in Power, who were likewiſe ſo mightily touched with ſuch an unuſual inſtance of tender Affection; that they pardoned the Mother, as the greateſt Reward they could beſtow on the Daughter for her marvellous Affection. *Valer. Max. ibid.*

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What

What can there be more just and reasonable, than for Children thus to endeavour to requite their Parents, for their great care and kindness towards them, when they were not able to help themselves? The time was, when their Parents were as Eyes, and Hands, and Feet to them; they did every thing for them, they not being capable to do any thing for themselves: How ready therefore should they be to serve their Parents, to assist them by all good Offices, when their condition requires it?

This is a Duty to which Children are so strictly obliged, (to wit, *the assisting and relieving of their Parents*) that no pretence is sufficient to absolve them from the Obligation thereof. The *Pharisees* thought they had found out an Exception from this Rule, which was this; that if Children gave away their Wealth to Pious and Charitable uses, they were freed from the Obligation of relieving their Parents: They taught them in this case, to tell their Parents, *It is Corban, that is to say, a Gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*, Mar. 7. 11. And by saying this, they made People believe, that they were sufficiently

ſufficiently freed from all Obligations to take care of, and provide for their Parents. But our Saviour reproves them ſeverely, telling them, that this was no other than the *making void the Commandments of God by their Traditions.*

Againſt unkind and unnatural Children.

We may ſee from this, what Judgment to make of ſuch unkind, undutiful, and unnatural Children, who do wholly neglect their Parents, eſpecially in their old Age, and in their poor and low Eſtate; who ſhew them no more pity, and expreſs no more love nor tenderneſs towards them, than if they were not their Parents; who grudge them the leaſt ſupply; and take all the wicked courſes that they can, to ſtarve them to death, that they may be rid of them; who wiſh and long for, and rejoyce in the Death of their poor Parents. O what a horrid Barbarity and Inhumanity is this! Shall not many Pagans riſe up in Judgment againſt ſuch Children, and Condemn them? How little do they deſerve the Name of, *Chriſtian Children*? Their true Name is, *Unchriſtian*, and *unnatural Children*. As *Solomon* bid the Sluggard, *go to the Ant*; ſo may we bid ſuch hard-hearted and unmerciful

unmerciful Children, *go to the Stork*, of whom it is told, * that when the old Dams cannot feed themſelves, their little ones feed and nouriſh them; when their Feathers fall from them, they cover them with their Feathers; and when they are not able to fly, they couple themſelves together, to carry them upon their Backs. Let *uncompaſſionate Children* go to this *compaſſionate Creature*, and conſider her ways and be wiſe; Let them learn from her, to be more kind and affectionate, and tender-hearted towards their Parents, and not any longer to harden their Bowels againſt them.

* *S. Baſil. in Hexaemer. Homil.* 8. *Ambroſ. Hexaem.* l. 5. c. 16.

8. *Duty, to pray for their Parents.*

8*thly*, Becauſe all that Children can do is not ſufficient to requite the Love and tender care of their Parents; therefore they ought to pray to God, that he would reward them, and preſerve them, and keep them alive; that he would ſupply all their wants, and comfort them in all their troubles, and requite their Love, their tender care,

and

and their great coſt and pains they have been at to bring them up, and to educate them. How happy are the Parents of ſuch Children, who are ſupplicants and interceſſors, at the Throne of Grace, for good things unto them? Such Children are the ſtrength of their Parents; they are a great bleſſing unto them.

Againſt Curſers of Parents.

If it be the Duty of Children, thus to pray to God, in behalf of their Parents; what ſhall we ſay of thoſe, who neither pray for them, nor themſelves, but live like the Beaſts that periſh, and mind nothing that's good? And if their Crime is great, who do not at all pray for their Parents; how dreadful is their Guilt, who Curſe them? What dreadful Judgments may ſuch Monſters of wickedneſs expect? *Prov.* 20. 20. *Who ſo Curſeth his Father or his Mother, his Lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſs*; that is, he ſhall be reduced unto a ſad, afflicted, and miſerable State; his proſperous condition (which is compared to Light, or to a Lamp) ſhall be turned into Adverſity and Miſery, and that very great, which is expreſſed by [*obſcure Darkneſs*,] he

he shall be made very miserable; his state and condition in the World shall become most uncomfortable; as it is for a Man who walketh in a way that is full of Light, where he beholds a great many Objects, which afford him pleasure and delight, suddenly to be deprived of all this, and to find himself all alone in obscure Darkness, without all help and comfort. By the Law of *Moses*, such ungodly and unnatural Children were without any pardon to be put to death. *Exod.* 21. 17. *He that Curseth his Father or his Mother, shall surely be put to Death.*

The Duties of Children towards their deceased Parents.

The Duties of Children towards their deceased Parents.

Besides the Duties which Children owe their Parents whilst they are alive, there are some things likewise for them to do after their Decease; Particularly,

1. Duty, they ought to bury them decently.

First, They ought to bury them decently according to their Quality, so far as the present Circumstances of their Estate will permit: They

They ought on the one hand to avoid whatever looks like Baſeneſs and Covetouſneſs, and which is not, in ſome meaſure, anſwerable to their Parents Eſtate and Place while they lived; and on the other hand, they ought to avoid an over-laviſh Sumptuouſneſs, they muſt do nothing above their Eſtate, or above their Rank and Quality. A great many, out of a vain and fooliſh humour of Solemnizing their Parents Funerals in a ſumptuous and ſplendid manner, have ſo far weakened their Eſtate, as ſcarce ever to be able to recover themſelves again. Children therefore ought, in this matter, to govern themſelves, by the Advice and Example of Prudent and Diſcreet Perſons of their own Rank, in the World; but eſpecially, they are herein to govern themſelves by the Will of the Dead, ſo far as it was made known to them or others: Thus, we ſee, *Joſeph* and his Brethren did to their Father *Jacob* when he died; he charged them to Bury him with his Fathers, in the Cave that is in the Field of *Ephron* the *Hittite*, *Gen.* 49. 29. And accordingly his Sons did as he commanded them, *Gen.* 50. 12, 13.

2*dly*

2. *Duty, to fulfil their last Will.*

2*dly.* They are likewise to shew the greatest readiness that is possible, to Obey their Parents in every other thing which by their last Will they appointed and Ordered to be done; for Example, the Payment of Debts and Legacies, the giving so much Money for some Excellent and Pious Design, or for the Relief of some Persons in Distress and Want, *&c.*

The Will of the Dead has, in all Ages, and amongst all People, been reckoned a thing most Sacred and Inviolable: Now, if the Will of the Deceased be Obligatory unto any, it must certainly be so in a special manner to Children, whom both the Laws of Natural and Revealed Religion require *to Obey their Parents in all things.*

3. *Duty, to call to mind their good Advices, and to follow their good Examples.*

3*dly.* They ought to call to mind often their Parents good Advices, and to follow their Pious Examples. If whilst they were alive, they neglected, or, at least, did not observe, so well as they should have done,

done, their Admonitions and Inſtructions, and did not make very great account of their good Examples; they ought (now they are gone from them, and to return to them no more) to endeavour to be ſo much the more careful to follow their uſeful Directions and Examples. There is no ſuch way as this, to keep the Memory of Parents freſh and green. There can no Monument be erected comparable to this, when Children imitate their Parents Virtue and Piety. The good Kings which came of the Stock and Lineage of *David*, made the Memory of their Father *David* to be ſtill ſweet and flouriſhing, when his Body was rotten in the Grave. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Solomon*, 1 *King.* 3. 3. *He walked in the Statutes of* David *his Father.* And of *Aſa*, it is ſaid, 1 *King.* 15. 11. *And Aſa did that which was right in the Eyes of the Lord, as did* David *his Father.* And of *Joſiah* it is written, 2 *King.* 22. 2. *He did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, and walked in all the ways of* David *his Father, and turned not aſide to the right hand, or to the left.*

'Twill

'Twill be an Act of Justice, as well as a Testimony of due Respect and Love to your Deceased Parents, now and then to make Honourable mention of them, to talk of their good Advices, their useful Sayings, and their good Customs and Examples. But this is not to be done too often, nor in all Companies; only amongst those who will bear it, and at such times when it is most likely to do good.

4. Duty, to do what they can Lawfully to suppress evil Reports concerning them.

4*thly*. They ought to do all that they can Lawfully, in a calm and prudent manner, to suppress evil Reports, which are spread abroad of their Parents after their Decease. The Credit and Honour of Parents ought to be very dear to Children: And therefore, when their good Name is wounded, and when they, by Death, are incapable to vindicate themselves, 'tis the Duty of Children, who are, as it were, their living Images, to do their utmost to preserve their Name from injurious Reports. If what is said of them be manifestly false, Children ought to make known the naked truth,

truth, so far as is fit; which will be the best and surest Vindication. But if what is said against their Parents be true, and of that Nature as to admit of no excuse or extenuation, the best thing that Children can do in such a case, is, to avoid such wicked things themselves as their Parents were Guilty of. They who follow the Evil Example of Parents, cause them to stink more and more. The posterity of *Jeroboam*, who followed his wretched Example, made his Evil Name to be the more remembred, and caused this blur to continue in his Character, from one Age to another, *Jeroboam which made Israel to Sin.*

5. Duty to retain a firm kindness for their Friends.

5*thly*. They ought to retain a sincere and firm kindness and esteem, for all those who witnessed a true and constant Christian friendship to their Parents, who were always faithful to them, ready to serve them, and to do them all good Offices, according to their ability: Such Persons, it may be very reasonably presumed, will not be treacherous and unfaithful to the Children, who have testified a lasting and faithful Friendship to

to the Parents. *Thy own Friend*, ſaith Solomon, *and thy Father's Friend, forſake not*, Prov. 27. 10.

Againſt Children who neglect theſe Duties.

Now, if it be the Duty of Children, to expreſs their Love and Regard towards their deceaſed Parents, in the abovementioned manner, what ſhall be ſaid of thoſe who run a courſe quite contrary to all this? No ſooner are their Parents dead, but they begin to rejoyce and triumph, and to bleſs themſelves, that at laſt they are delivered from thoſe reſtraints they were formerly under, and that now they have the liberty to give themſelves the ſwing, and to gratifie every Luſt and Paſſion, as much as ever they can. As to their Parents *Will*, they take no care to fulfill it; henceforth they know no other *Will* but their own; as to that of their Parents, they think they had too much to do with it, when they were alive, and now that they are dead, they reckon themſelves abſolved from all Obligations to them. As to their Debts and Legacies, *&c.* They make no Conſcience to pay them, unleſs a neceſſity of ſubmitting to the Laws force them to do their

their Duty. As to the Credit and good Name of their Parents, ſo little regard have they thereto, as to be ready to give ear to thoſe who ſpeak ill of them; yea themſelves are apt to blaze abroad ſuch things as tend to their Reproach and Diſparagement. As to their Advices and Admonitions, they laugh at them, they look on them as fit only to be liſt'ned to by melancholly dull Souls, who have no reliſh of Manly Pleaſures: They have no mind to be interrupted in their Mirth and Jollity, and therefore farewell any Advice or Council that looks like ſerious. As to their Example, they ſlight and deſpiſe it; they look on themſelves as too wiſe to be led either by Precept or Example, but according as they ſuit their own Humour and Inclination. As to their Parents Friends, they turn their Backs upon them, they break off all Correſpondence with them, and keep them at the greateſt diſtance, as if they were afraid of them; they know that they are of the ſame Temper and Principles with their Parents, and therefore they cannot endure them, for fear of being told by them ſome thing or other, that does not agree with

with their vain and wicked Practices, and with their rash and foolish Designs. In a word, they study a perfect Opposition to their Parents in all things; they pull down whatever they built, they root up whatever they planted, they hate what they loved, and love whatever they hated. So unlike do they render themselves to their Parents in all their Manners and Customs, that all who see them must needs call them a degenerate Seed, Cursed Children, unnatural Plants, ready to be hewn down and cast into the Fire.

From what hath been said, Children may see what their Duty is, which they owe to their Parents; which that they may perform, there are several things which serve as powerful Motives and Arguments to excite them.

Motives to excite Children to do these things.

1 *Motive, from the divine Commandment.*

First, It will tend mightily to move them to *Honour their Father and Mother*, if they consider who requires this at their hands. This Law proceedeth not from Men, but from God; It

It is a Law made by him who is their Maker; and therefore by right of Creation may require their Obedience: It is a Law made by their faithful preserver, and rich provider; and therefore by Virtue of his daily care over them, and kindness to them, may command them what he thinks good: This is the will of their Father in Heaven, of their Lord and King, of him who will call them to an account, *and render to them according to their Works*; of him who is their greatest and best friend, if they do his Will and keep his Commandments; but will be their most dreadful and terrible Enemy, if they do not obey his Voice: If therefore Children have any sense of God in their Souls; If they consider his infinite greatness, Power, Wisdom, Justice, Truth, Faithfulness, Mercy, and Kindness; they cannot but endeavour to perform what he requires, when once they know what is his holy will and pleasure. Now, as to what I speak of, to wit the Duty of Children to Parents, it is plain and clear, not only from those Laws which are contained in Holy Scripture, which were revealed from Heaven to Holy Men,

whom God made use of to be the publishers thereof to the World; but likewise from the Laws of Nature, those clear impressions which God hath made on the Minds of Men in all places, and in all Ages; whereby they are taught that Children ought to honour and obey their Parents, to love them and to relieve them, and provide for them, if they stand in need of their help*. These have always been the calm and sober thoughts of all Men; and when any were so wicked as to violate this sacred Law, they were hated and abhorred by all others; and in all well govern'd States, were punished according to the demerits of their Crime, and the degree of their disobedience and perverseness, either immediately by the Parents, or by publick Judges, upon complaint made by Parents. The Sense of all this ought to move Children to honour their Father and Mother, that they may approve themselves to God, who requires them to do so, and that upon the severest Penalties, if they shall dare to dishonour them, and disobey them.

* *See Simplicius upon Epictet. Cap.* 37. *and Arrianus l.* 2. *c.* 10.

Secondly,

Secondly, To encourage Children to perform their Duty to their Parents, God hath been pleased to add a gracious promise. *That thy days may be long* † *upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* He might only have commanded them to do this, by Virtue of his absolute Power and Sovereign Authority, which he has over all Men, without proposing any Reward; but such is his infinite Bounty and Goodness, that he hath added a Promise to the Command, thereby to make Childrens Duty the more easie.

2. *Motive, from the Divine Promise.*

† *Or, that they, i. e. Thy Parents, may prolong thy days,* to wit, by their Prayers and Blessing.

As to the Promise it self, it is not to be understood absolutely, as if all good Children should live long; promises of Temporal Blessings are made conditionally, that is, so far as God sees such things best and fittest for us: So that as to this promise of long life, God will bestow it, if it be most for his own Glory, and the good and Benefit of Children. Oftentimes he does lengthen out the years of pious and dutiful Children; whereas the years of

wicked and undutiful Children are ſhortned by their prophane and wicked courſes; ſo that ſome of them are cut off immediately by the hand of God; and others are put to death by the hand of Man.

As for thoſe Children who live not to a great Age, tho' they are very dutiful and obedient to their Parents; God doth make up what is wanting in the number of their Years here, with an everlaſting Life, and Glory in Heaven. In which caſe there's no cauſe to complain, as if God did not fulfil his promiſe to them. For as there is no reaſon for a Man to complain, who is employed to work for ſo much a day, if his Maſter ſee it fit to free him from his Work, and pay him all his Wages before the third part of his time is out: Even ſo, if God think fit to ſet his Children at Liberty, from the toil and labour of this life, and to beſtow upon them Glorious and Eternal Rewards, while they are in the Morning or Noon, as it were, of their Age, there is no ground of complaining upon his doing ſo, but rather great matter of Praiſe and Thankſgiving unto him,

him, whoſe Mercy and Love is infinitely great.

But beſides this Reward in the other World; there are Temporal Bleſſings which God will beſtow on thoſe who keep this Commandment. *My Son*, ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 1. 8, 9. *Hear the Inſtruction of thy Father, and forſake not the Law of thy Mother. For they ſhall be an Ornament of Grace unto thy Head, and Chains about thy Neck.* That is, if thou art obedient to the Commands of thy Parents, this will make thee very amiable not only in the ſight of God, but even of Men, who cannot but love and eſteem ſuch Children, who carry themſelves as they ought to do towards their Parents.

But further, to encourage Children to honour their Parents, there is a promiſe of Proſperity added to that of long life, *Deut.* 5. 16. *That thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee*, &c. The ſame Promiſe is repeated, *Eph.* 6. 3. with this difference only, that it is prefixed to the promiſe of long life, *that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayeſt live long on the Earth.* When God does prolong the Years of his Children, he often

ten affords them more or leſs of Temporal Proſperity alſo, as he ſees it will turn to their good, that ſo their long life may be the more ſweet and comfortable to them.

How acceptable and pleaſing to God was the Obedience of the *Rechabites* unto their Father, tho' his Commands ſeemed very hard and ſevere, to wit, *That they ſhould drink no Wine, nor build Houſe, nor ſow Seed, nor plant Vineyard, nor have any, but ſhould dwell in Tents*, Jer. 35. 6, 7, &c. And ver. 18. Jeremiah *ſaid unto the Houſe of the* Rechabites, *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Iſrael, becauſe you have obeyed the Command of* Jonadab *your Father, and kept all his Precepts, and done according to all that he hath Commanded you: Therefore thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Iſrael,* Jonadab *the Son of* Rechab *ſhall not want a Man to ſtand before me for ever.* Which words import, that he would take a particular care of them, that he would be mindful of them, and have them in his Eye; that he would preſerve them, and ſhew them his favour and love, and continue unto them thoſe Offices and Priviledges which

they

they enjoyed, which some think were, of being Scribes and Doctors of the Law, and having some Charge in or about the Temple.

Thirdly, Besides the Command of God, and the Reward which he hath promised to them who honour their Parents, how strong an Argument ought it to be unto all Children, to excite them to this, when they consider the Example of their Blessed Lord and Master, their King and Saviour, Jesus Christ? of whom it is said, *that he was subject unto his Parents*, *Luke* 2. 51. And if he, who was so much greater than his Parents, who was their Lord, their King, their Maker, their Saviour, and Redeemer; if he, who was the Son of God, and *thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*, I say, if he was subject to his Parents, ought not all Children to be so to their Parents? and to esteem it their Glory to imitate their Prince and Saviour, as in his other Virtues, so in his Obedience and Subjection to his Parents? Shall any Man think himself too good to do this, when Christ did it before him? Can it be too mean

3. *Motive, from the Example of our Blessed Saviour.*

for a Worm to do that, which a Man, a great Man, and a mighty Prince hath done? Shall vile Sinners think themſelves abaſed and diſhonoured by doing that which was done before by him, *who knew no ſin, and in whoſe Mouth there was found no guile*, who was *holy, harmleſs, and undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners, and made higher than the Heavens*, *Heb.* 7. 26.

As our Bleſſed Lord was a great and Noble Pattern to us in other things, ſo particularly in his love to his Parents. When he was upon the Croſs, a little before he gave up the Ghoſt, he expreſſed how great his love was to his Mother, and how tender a care he had of her. John 19. 25, 26, 27. *Now there ſtood by the Croſs of Jeſus, his Mother, and his Mother's Siſter*, Mary *the Wife of* Cleophas, *and* Mary Magdalene. *When Jeſus therefore ſaw his Mother, and the Diſciple ſtanding by whom he loved, he ſaith unto his Mother, Woman, behold thy Son. Then ſaith he to the Diſciple, behold thy Mother. And from that hour, that Diſciple took her unto his own home.* He commends his Mother to *John* (*Joſeph* in all probability being dead) that he might take care of her,

as

as of his own Mother. Tho' he was at this time in the midſt of great pain and anguiſh, tho' his hands and his feet were nailed to the Croſs, tho' his Head was Crowned with Thorns, tho' he lay under the moſt inſupportable Burden that ever Man lay under, yet, as if the ſight of his Mother had made him forget all his Sufferings and Torments, he affectionately recommends her to the care of another, who he knew would perform all the Offices of a loving Son unto her. He knew how great an affliction it would be to her, to be deprived of the Comfort of his preſence in the World; he knew to how many neceſſities and wants, ſhe ſhould be expoſed by his leaving of her; and therefore he gives it in charge to the beloved Diſciple, to do the Duty of a Son unto her, to be to her in his ſtead, to honour her, to love her, to ſerve her, to take care of her, and provide whatever might be fit for her. This ſhews all Children what is their Duty towards their Parents, to wit, that they ought to take care of them, ſo long as they live, and are able to do it; they ought with all reſpect and kindneſs, to per-

form unto them all those Offices, which the Laws of Nature and Christianity require.

4. Motive, from the Examples of some Heathens.

Fourthly, May not the Examples of some Heathens, which have already been mentioned, excite Christian Children to perform their Duty to their Parents? There are a great many more Instances might be added to this purpose; I shall only mention a few. The *first* is, * of the brave *Coriolanus*, that Great *Roman* Commander, who being very ill used by his Country-men, fled to the *Volscians*, who were at that time at War with the *Romans*. Within a little time after his coming amongst them, he was made General of their Forces; in which Service he had great Success against the *Romans*, gaining several Victories over them, whereby he was encouraged to approach to the very Walls of *Rome*: His Countrey-men were terribly alarmed with this; so that they were forced to make humble Addresses to him, to deprecate his displeasure, but to no purpose: They sent their Priests in their

* *Valer. Max. l. 5. c. 4. & Plut. in Coriolano.*

their Sacred Vestments, but to as little Effect: But no sooner did his Mother, attended with his Wife and Children, come to him, but he submitted himself to her. "Now, says he, you have "overcome me indeed, when the in- "treaties of my Mother are added to "yours; tho' *Rome* deserve my hatred, "yet for my Mother's sake I will spare "it; and immediately he withdrew his Army.

A *second* Example, is that of the Worthy *Athenian* Captain *Cimon*, * who not being able to redeem the Corps of his Father, which was Arrested for Debt, sold himself, and became a Slave, that his Deceased Father's Body might be freed from that Arrest that was upon it, and so might have Honourable Burial. This great Man was famous for his Noble and Valiant Exploits, for his great Courage and Excellent Conduct in Military Affairs; but there was not any thing for which he was so much admired and loved, as for this wonderful instance of Affection and Respect to his Father.

* *Val. Max. ibid.*

A Third Example, is, * of a Son, whose Father and Uncle were at great variance. It happ'ned that the Uncle, during this Contention, fell into great want. His Brother was so madly and wickedly set against him, that he not only would not relieve him himself, but also forbad his Son to do it. The young Man considered his Uncles Case to be such, as obliged his Father and himself both, to help him all they could: But if his Father, through his violent Passion and Prejudice neglected his Duty, which the Laws of Nature and Humanity required, yet he judged himself bound to do him all the Service he could, and not to suffer him to starve for want, when it was in his power to support him. The Father being inraged against his Son, because he took pity upon his Uncle, disinherited him; which the young Man bore very patiently. His Uncle seeing how unjustly he was dealt with, adopted him, and made him his Heir. After some time the Uncle grew very Rich, having got a good Inheritance; but the Father grew poor, and was not able to maintain himself without

* *Sen.* l. 1. *Controversiarum.* c. 1.

out relief from others. The Uncle continuing ſtill in his bitter Enmity againſt his Brother, forbad the young Man to help him: But ſuch was his Love and Dutifulneſs to his Father, that notwithſtanding his former Injuſtice and ſeverity againſt him, and notwithſtanding the Commands of his Uncle, he took care of him, and did not ſuffer him to want for any thing, that he was able to afford him. The Uncle was ſo provoked, by his Adopted Sons kindneſs to his Natural Parent; that he likewiſe diſinherited him. But the pious Son, continued to do what he thought his Duty, amidſt all the Diſcouragements he met with.

May not ſuch ſhining Patterns amongſt the Pagans, make many Chriſtians aſhamed, who come ſo far ſhort of them, in their Duty and Obedience to their Parents? Shall not they riſe up in Judgment and condemn Chriſtians? who, tho' they have a more excellent, compleat, and perfect Rule, tho' they have a great deal more Light to direct them in their Duty to their Parents; and tho' they have much greater aſſiſtances to enable them to perform their Duty; do never-

theleſs

theleſs carry themſelves ſo undutifully, and unchriſtianly, as if they had never heard of the Goſpel of Chriſt, yea, as if they had been born without any impreſſions of Natural Religion on their Minds, whereby all Nations are ſo far inſtructed and enlightned, as to acknowledge, that to honour, obey, love, ſerve, and aſſiſt our Parents, are Duties of unqueſtionable and indiſpenſible Obligation.

The Concluſion, ſhewing how Children ought to improve what hath been ſaid.

From what hath been ſaid, Children may ſee how great reaſon they have to perform all thoſe Offices of Love, Honour, and Subjection to their Parents, that God requires of them. It remains that they ſeriouſly and impartially conſider, what their practice has been, and whether they have done thoſe things which God requires them to do towards their Father and Mother.

That you may do this to good purpoſe, it's fit that you employ ſome time in looking back on your Lives, in conſidering how you have honoured, loved, and obeyed your Parents; that you may

ſee,

ſee, whether you have carried your ſelves towards them, in words and deeds, as became good Children, who have a ſenſe of Religion; or whether you have not diſhonoured, neglected, and diſobeyed them.

If upon Examination of your ſelves, you find that you have done your Duty; that you have ſincerely endeavoured to obey them in all things; that you have loved them heartily, and payed them that Reſpect which you knew was due unto them: Bleſs God, who hath *given you to will and to do according to his good Pleaſure.* But becauſe there are defects and imperfections, which cleave to our exacteſt performances, therefore it is needful that you beg of God to forgive you, wherein ſoever, through Ignorance, you have been faulty or defective in thoſe Duties you owed them.

But if upon inquiry into your Hearts and Lives, you find that you have wilfully neglected to do what you ought to have done; if inſtead of honouring them, you have diſhonoured them, you have ſlighted and deſpiſed them, you have mocked and ſcorned them, you have reviled and reproached them;

if

if instead of obeying them, you find that you have been stubborn and disobedient to them, you have refused to follow their Counsels and Admonitions, you have done your own Will, and followed your own vain humour and fancy, in contempt of their Will; if instead of submitting to their Corrections and Chastenings, you have refused submission to them, aud perhaps have rebelled against them; if instead of loving them, you have hated them, and wished, and desired their Death; if instead of relieving them in their wants, and supplying them with what was necessary for them, you have wasted their substance by your riotous and extravagant Living, you have put off all bowels of compassion and tenderness towards them; if, I say, you find that you have thus carried your selves towards them, in a way so contrary to your Duty, how ought you to lament and mourn for your wickedness and folly? How ought you to accuse your selves for your great iniquity, and to aggravate your Crimes by all just and fit considerations?

You may in this manner expostulate the case with your selves: *What a sad and*

and unworthy Wretch am I, who have thus diſhonoured, hated, and diſobeyed my dear Parents, who are under God the Authors of my Being in the World, to whom I owe that I am! who have proved ſo undutiful to them who took care of me, when I could not take care of my ſelf; who fed and cloathed me, who were at ſo great pains and charge for me, who have employed ſo much of their time and ſtrength to provide for me all neceſſary things; and yet that I ſhould prove ſo wicked as to deſpiſe them, to diſobey them, and hate them, not to ſubmit my ſelf unto them, what baſe and wicked ingratitude is it! That I, who ſhould have been a Bleſſing to them, ſhould prove a Curſe! That I who ſhould have been a Comfort to them, ſhould be the cauſe of their grief and ſorrow! That I who ſhould have been a help unto them, ſhould be ſo great a hinderance! That I who ſhould have been the ſtay and ſupport of their Old Age, ſhould prove their ruine, and the cauſe of the ſpending of their days in anguiſh and trouble! What a prodigious impiety is this! What a wretched and abominable Creature am I, who have been guilty of ſuch horrid wickedneſs! Who have had ſo little regard

to

to those who are to me in God's stead here in the World! What punishment do I not deserve! What a wonder is it that God hath spared me and pitied me, and hath not cut me off in the midst of my disobedience, neglect, and contempt of my dear Parents! That he hath not made me an Example to all others, and a standing Monument of his just displeasure! That he has not bound me hand and foot, and cast me into utter darkness, and given me my portion with Hypocrites and Sinners; but hath lengthened out my years, and given me time and place to repent.

Having thus in your own minds expostulated the matter with your selves, you may in the next place adore and bless the Divine Goodness, the infinite Mercy, and astonishing Kindness of God towards you, in having spared and pitied you; in not dealing with you after your sins, nor rewarding you after your iniquities; but that he hath been pleased to wait to be gracious to you. Humbly confess your faults and offences unto him; with great shame and confusion of face, and with true grief and sorrow of heart ackowledge your

your iniquities; make particular confeſſion, ſo far as you remember, of your ſtubbornneſs and diſobedience to your Parents, of your contempt and neglect of them, of your hating them, and wiſhing Evil to them, of your ſpeaking irreverently and wickedly to them, or of them, of your not ſubmitting to their Corrections, of your not heeding their Admonitions and Counſels, nor regarding their juſt Reproofs, *&c.* Beg of God, for Chriſt's ſake, to have mercy on you, and to blot out your Sins, and to make you what you ought to be.

After this, it is fit to form ſincere and hearty Reſolutions of doing your Duty, in all reſpects, to your Parents, for the time to come; of loving, honouring, obeying, and ſerving them, as you ought to do. Reſolve to amend whatever has been amiſs and defective either in your thoughts, words, or deeds, with relation to them. Beg of God, to ſtrengthen you in your Reſolutions; to fortifie you againſt all Temptations; to inſpire you with his Fear and Love; to guide you by his good Spirit; and that he would never leave you, nor forſake you.

If

If the Example and Society of other wicked Children has been an occaſion of making you ſo bad, and of hardening you in your Contempt, Stubbornneſs, and Diſobedience; reſolve to break off your Familiarities with them; let them and all others know, and ſee, that you are ſorry for your Diſobedience to your Parents; for your having diſhonoured, ſlighted, and neglected them; and that you are reſolved to do ſo no more; but will, by the help of God, approve your ſelves Dutiful, Kind, and Obedient Children.

Not only muſt you in this manner make your Humble and Penitent Confeſſion to Almighty God, your Heavenly Father, whom you have provoked, as by your other Sins, ſo particularly by your diſobedience to your Parents, and by your diſhonouring of them; but you muſt likewiſe confeſs unto your Parents the Crimes whereof you have been guilty againſt them; you muſt ſay as the Prodigal did, *I will ariſe, and go to my Father, and will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee; and am no more*

worthy to be called thy Son, Luke 15. 18, 19. Let your Parents see that you are heartily sorry for your Offences against them by Word or Deed; beg of them to forgive you, and desire them to pray to God that he would forgive you.

You are to be careful after this, to fulfil your Purposes and Resolutions, and to perform all those Duties of Love, Honour, and Obedience to your Parents, wherein you were formerly so defective. For this end it is fit, daily and earnestly to beg of God, that he would direct and assist you by his Holy Spirit, to do what is well-pleasing in his sight. It is necessary for you to be very jealous of your deceitful and desperately wicked Hearts; to watch over them carefully, lest they turn aside towards your former crooked Ways; lest you return *with the Dog to the Vomit*. Watch against all those Temptations, whereby you are most in danger of being seduced, and intangled again in your former perverse Practices and Customs.

As you have been formerly very negligent and defective in Honouring and Obeying

Obeying your Parents, endeavour for the future, ſo much the more, to perform all thoſe Duties which you owe unto them, with great care and exactneſs.

As you have been great Examples of Diſobedience, ſtrive to be ſo much the greater Patterns of Obedience. Endeavour to do all that you can, that they who have been, by your Counſels or Examples, corrupted, and made ſtubborn, and diſobedient, may be reformed, and reſcued from their Sins and Wickedneſs; that as you have been Inſtruments to promote Satan's Kingdom, ſo you may be zealous for the glory of God, for promoting Piety and true Virtue in the World, whereof this is no inconſiderable part, that *Children Honour their Father and Mother, and do all thoſe Duties with chearfulneſs unto them, which God requires.*

This is the way to obtain the divine pardon, to turn away his Wrath, and to keep off thoſe heavy Judgments which are threatned againſt ſtubborn Children, and ſuch who mock and ſcorn their Parents: Or if God ſee it

fit

fit to punish you here, he will make your Corrections and Punishments, and all other things, *work together for your good*; and after he hath tryed you, he will bestow upon you rewards of everlasting Life and Glory.

As for those who are so perverse as to despise all Counsel and Advice, who refuse to hearken to any Instructions, who are resolved to go on in their stubbornness and disobedience to their Parents, in slighting and vilifying them; let them remember what the Wise Man saith, *Eccles.* 11. 9. *Rejoice, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thine heart cheer thee, in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine Eyes: But know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into Judgment.*

An

An Appendix concerning the Duties of Children to their Step-Parents.

The Duties of Children to their Step-Parents.

HAving ſpoken of the Duties of Children to their Natural Parents, I ſhall add a few things concerning their Duties to their Step-Parents.

Children ought to honour their Step-Parents, to carry themſelves Reſpectfully towards them, and to avoid every thing, either in words or deeds, which has an appearance of Neglect and Contempt.

They ought to Obey them, and to ſhew great readineſs to ſerve them, in any thing that is in their power to do for them; and to avoid whatever looks like ſtubbornneſs, eſpecially in ſuch things, wherein their Natural Parent requires them to be Obedient to their Step-Parent.

They

They ought to carry themſelves kindly and lovingly towards them, and to avoid whatever looks like Hatred or Malice.

They ought to ſubmit to their Reproofs, and to their Chaſtenings, eſpecially when their Natural Parent deſires the Step-Parent to reprove or correct them for their faults.

They ought to hearken to their Admonitions, to follow their good Counſels and Examples, and to be thankful for whatever they either do or ſay for their benefit and advantage.

They ought to bear patiently with any thing, in their humour and temper, that is not ſo ſweet and pleaſant; and to beware, leſt they be thereby provoked, to do or ſay what becometh not Children, towards thoſe who are in the place of Parents to them.

As to theſe particular Duties, I thought it needleſs to ſay much, having treated of them more fully in the preceeding Diſcourſe, about Childrens Duties to their Natural Parents: I ſhall therefore in the next place propoſe

Some Motives to stir up Children to be Dutiful to their Step-Parents.

Some Motives to stir up Children to be Dutiful to them.

The *first* thing which should prevail with Children to carry themselves Dutifully towards their Step-Parents, is the regard that is due to the Laws of God, whereby it is declared that Man and Wife *are no more twain, but one Flesh*; They are, by Marriage, united in the nearest and closest manner that can be. From whence it follows, by a very Natural Consequence, that 'tis the Duty of Children to carry themselves in the most respectful and loving manner, that is possible, towards those who are, by Marriage, made one with their Natural Parents.

2*dly*. The Respect and Love that Children owe to their Natural Parents, oblige them to shew the utmost Respect, and all sincere Affection, to those whom they have taken into so near a Relation with themselves. We see what the Laws of Friendship do amongst Men, who are very careful to shew all possible Respect and Kind-

ness

neſs to thoſe, for whom their Friends have a great Value and Affection. How much more ought Children to love, honour, and ſerve thoſe whom their Parents have made one with themſelves, by chuſing them into ſo near and cloſe a Relation and Union.

3*dly*. Does not even Prudence oblige them to all this? Is not this the way to ingage their Step-Parents to be reſpectful, kind, and ſerviceable to them, and ready to do them all good Offices? Tho' there are ſome Step-Parents of ſo barbarous and Savage a Temper, that nothing can oblige them, or work upon them; yet there are but few, in compariſon, who will not be affected and prevailed upon with Kindneſs, Reſpect, and good Offices, eſpecially when they are not for a ſhort time, but of long continuance.

4*thly*. Does not Self-Love likewiſe oblige Children to do theſe things? This is the way for them to make their lives eaſie and comfortable, to enjoy a great deal of Peace, and contentment of Mind: When they reflect upon their having done what is ſuit-

ble to the Laws of Religion, to the Rules which the Wisdom from above layeth down, it must needs afford them a very sensible Pleasure and great Satisfaction; whereas, by carrying themselves undutifully, they bring upon themselves a great deal of Vexation and Trouble; they not only alienate more and more the Affection of their Step-Parents, but they likewise provoke their Natural Parents to be less kind to them, if not quite to turn their Backs upon them.

From what hath been said, it appears how great reason Children have to carry themselves with great Respect and Love, and with all possible Dutifulness towards their Step-Parents.

Against those who are undutiful towards their Step-Parents.

How greatly therefore are they to be blamed, who make no Conscience of doing their Duty towards them? There are many who make it their business to vex and torment their Step-Parents, to affront them, and to disgrace them: They are very ready to aggravate all their Weaknesses and Imperfections, and do thereby endeavour to cause others to hate and to despise

deſpiſe them; they invent too often a great many things which they charge them with, that ſo they may by any means, tho' never ſo wicked and unjuſt, render them odious and infamous. And, which is worſt of all, they do all that ever they can, by the moſt impious arts that malicious and Deviliſh Wit can contrive, to alienate from them the affections of their Natural Parents, and to ſet them together by the ears; by which means very dreadful and Tragical Effects do oft-times follow, when Husband and Wife are inflamed one againſt another. *Where Envying and Strife is*, ſaith St. *James*, *Chap.* 3. *v.* 16. *there is Confuſion and every evil Work.* How often do ſuch Diſcords and Diviſions end in the utter Ruin and Deſtruction both of Parents and Children? *Every Houſe divided againſt it ſelf*, ſaith our Saviour, *Mat.* 12. 25. *ſhall not ſtand.* And therefore, let all thoſe who have any regard to the Honour of God, who have any thing of ſincere Affection to their Natural Parents, who deſire to live in Peace, who wiſh well to the Families to which they belong, and are willing to prevent their utter

and Deſolation, let all ſuch, I ſay, as have any ſenſe of theſe things, be careful to behave themſelves with all due Reſpect and Love towards thoſe who are in the place of Parents to them. By doing whereof, as they will gain the Love and Reſpect of all who are wiſe and good, ſo they may be aſſured of obtaining from God great and laſting Bleſſings, which he never fails to beſtow on all thoſe who ſincerely endeavour to Obey his Laws, and who ſeek his Glory.

A DISCOURSE About the RIGHT WAY Of Improving our TIME.

By *James Kirkwood*, Rector of *Astwick* in *Bedfordshire*.

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Ephes. V. 16.

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

The Introduction.

OF all the outward Blessings, which God bestows upon us, there is none so valuable and precious as our Time. God bestows upon us his other Blessings in great variety and plenty; but in this he seems to be more sparing, for it is given us not in large proportions, but as it were drop by drop, one minute after another; never two minutes together: whenever he gives us one, he takes away another. And yet how strange is it to think, that a great many spend their time in Vanity and Folly! Time is to many like a dead Commodity; they cannot tell what to do with it; they are ready to throw it away for no-

thing, or for that which is little better: instead of improving and using it in virtuous and profitable actions and designs, they waste it in trifling and vanity, which is an Argument of the greatest Folly; as on the other hand, the right husbanding of Time, is a great Instance of true Wisdom.

The Text explained.

The Apostle having exhorted the *Ephesians* to *walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*, he immediately subjoins [*Redeeming the time.*] Intimating thereby, that there is no better way for us to shew our selves wise, than by employing our time to good purpose, Redeeming and buying it; or, as some read the words, *Buying the Opportunity*, or a fit occasion and season for doing good. It is a Metaphor taken from Merchants, who, when they have a great likelyhood and probability, of making considerable gain and advantage in buying and selling, part with their pleasures, or lesser cares and concerns, that they may make a good bargain, and purchase that which they greatly desire. So the Christian, the Man that is good and wise, ought to deny himself in his Pleasures and

and outward delights, or even in his ordinary affairs and concerns, when he has any great prospect of doing somewhat considerable, for the glory of God, the good of his Neighbour, and the benefit of his own Soul.

The reason which the Apostle useth, is, [*Because the days are evil*] that is, either bad and sinful, full of wickedness and folly; so that it is very hard and difficult then to be good, when sin, like a violent and impetuous Torrent, carries all down before it: This ought to make you redeem all occasions of doing good, that you may fortifie others in Virtue and Piety, that you may rescue those that are carried down the stream by bad Example, and may build up your selves in Holiness, and that you may be made *strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might.* Or [*Because the days are evil*] may relate to the danger you are in through the fury and malice of your Enemies, who are ready to do you all the mischief that is in their power; the sense whereof should make you improve all occasions of doing good, not knowing how soon you may be deprived of your present

present happy opportunities and seasons for working.

The design of this Discourse, is, to shew you; *1st*, How you are to redeem your Time: And, *2dly*, To propose some Considerations to excite you to do so.

How Time is to be redeemed.

1. *Time to be redeemed from sleep.*

First, YOu are to redeem your Time from excessive and immoderate sleep. It is necessary for all Men to refresh their Bodies with sleep and rest; and the state of some Mens Bodies requires a great deal more than others; so that no exact Rules can be given about the proportion of sleep that's proper for every one: Only in general, it is fit that all Persons redeem as much time from sleeping, as the health of their Bodies can permit; that so they may employ part of that time to some good and useful purpose, which they were wont to waste in the shadow of Death, as it were; whereof sleep is the picture and representation.

In

In the ancient Church we find, many were wont to riſe up in the night to pray, that ſo they might day and night keep alive in their Souls Divine impreſſions; that they might preſerve a reliſh and taſte of heavenly and ſpiritual things; that excellent Objects might not be removed too far out of their ſight. This is a practice, which, perhaps, very few in theſe cold Countries are able ſafely to imitate; eſpecially at ſome times of the year. The weakneſs and tenderneſs of ſome bodies makes it to them impracticable; becauſe it would render them unfit at other times, not only for religious performances, but for the other neceſſary Actions of life. Some likewiſe have ſo little time allowed them for their repoſe in the Night, that they cannot do this, in their preſent Circumſtances. As for ſuch who are capable, without any ſort of inconvenience, to follow this ancient Practice, let them do it: They want not ſufficient Encouragement thereto, if they conſider that thereby they have the opportunity of flying, as it were, from theſe Regions of darkneſs and miſery, of ſin and folly, unto thoſe glorious Regions of light and

and happineſs, of purity and perfection; there to converſe with God their chiefeſt Joy; to behold his Face, the light of his Countenance; to taſte and ſee how good he is; to walk with him; to be ſatisfied with his Salvation; to drink of thoſe Rivers of unmixed pleaſure, which are in his Preſence, *the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God.*

As for thoſe, who are not able to deny themſelves of their repoſe in the night ſeaſon; all that I ſhall ſay to them, is this; When at ſome times it pleaſeth God to take away their ſleep, and to keep them awake, let them redeem a few moments from vain thoughts, by lifting up their Souls to God, darting up ſome pious thoughts and fervent deſires Heaven-wards; reflecting on the Goodneſs and Love of God; admiring his glorious Perfections; calling to mind, and conſidering his gracious Providences; longing for, and breathing after that happy State when they ſhall be placed above all the infirmities and frailties of the fleſh, above outward neceſſities, above Sin and Satan, and all their Enemies: And after this, they may again compoſe them-

themſelves to ſleep. This is a means to keep the Soul awake, to entertain it in a way worthy of it, to accuſtom it to the contemplation of excellent and divine Objects, to keep Heaven always near its view; and not to ſuffer the things of another life, to be removed too far out of ſight. We ſee in what temper of mind the Spouſe was, *Cant.* 5. 2. *I ſleep, but my heart waketh.* Even amidſt her repoſe and ſleep, her thoughts were running after her deſirable and beloved Object, which poſſeſſed her heart, and filled her thoughts when ſhe was awake. And ſo it is with pious Souls ſometimes, when their thoughts have been much imployed and buſied about ſpiritual and heavenly things in the day time, they dream of them in the Night ſeaſon. *Tho' they ſleep, yet their heart waketh.*

This watchful temper is an Excellent means to enrich the Soul; whereas ſlothfulneſs, and giving up ones ſelf to drowſineſs and ſleep, cauſeth ſpiritual beggery. *An idle Soul* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 19. 15.) *ſhall ſuffer hunger.* And, *Prov.* 20. 13. *Love not ſleep, leſt thou come to Poverty: Open thine Eyes, and thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with Bread.* Then

was

was it that *Samſon* loſt his Hair, wherein was his ſtrength, when he was aſleep. *Judg.* 16. 19.

As it is a fault at any time to waſte our precious hours in this ſluggiſh and lazy manner, ſo eſpecially when God affords very favourable opportunities of doing ſome great good to our ſelves or others. *He that ſleepeth in Harveſt* (ſaith the wiſe Man,) *is a Son that cauſeth ſhame*; *Prov.* 10. 5. that is, he makes his Father and Friends aſhamed of him, and brings ſhame and diſgrace on himſelf.

Now is the day of Grace, now is the acceptable time, now is the ſeaſon of gathering the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, and of making ſure an Harveſt of everlaſting Glory. *And therefore, let us not ſleep, as do others; but let us watch and be ſober*, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 6.

2. *Time to be redeemed from dreſſing the Body.*

Secondly, Redeem time from dreſſing and adorning the Body: Let not more time be ſpent that way than is meet and fit. Let your firſt care every day be to dreſs and adorn the better part, to put on the true Ornaments, to cloath your ſelves with Humility, Meekneſs, Patience,

ence, Charity, and with all other Virtues, which are of great price in the ſight of God. *Put off the Works of darkneſs, and put on the Armour of Light.* Raiſe your Souls towards Heaven, by ſome ſhort and fervent Ejaculations. Read the Word of God with great attention and humility, with an earneſt deſire to know his Will, and with a ſincere purpoſe to do it. Endeavour to feed and nouriſh your Souls by ſerious Meditation. Call on God, by humble and earneſt Prayer, to pardon you, to bleſs you, to direct and proſper you in all your ways, and to ſave and preſerve you from all Evils, Ghoſtly and Bodily. Form good purpoſes and ſtrong reſolutions, to do what is good and right. Set the Lord always before you. Reſolve to ſeek his Glory in all things, whether you eat or drink, or whatever elſe you do.

After having done thoſe things which are needful for the Soul, you may next do what is fit and decent as to your Attire and Cloathing, according to your Circumſtances in the World. Beware leſt you pride your ſelves in your Apparel: Do not therein gratifie your Vanity, to go beyond others of your Rank

Rank and Quality, to make your selves be taken notice of more than others. Too great care about adorning the outward Man, gives just cause to suspect that the chief business is neglected.

Consider what it is that you deck and adorn with so much care and cost; even a poor, vile, sinful Body, that's full of rottenness and corruption; consider that within a little while it will become a very ugly, deformed, and stinking Carcass, and be food to the Worms. If they who bestow so much time every day in painting and patching, and such like things, would but bestow a few Minutes in thinking of the Grave, and what the Body will become within a very little time, so vile and loathsom, that even they who do love it most dearly, will then avoid it, and be glad to have it removed out of their sight; and that their face, which now they themselves admire so much, and which they are ready to think every body else admires likewise, shall within a short time be eaten thorough by vile Worms, and wasted and made ugly with Rottenness and Corruption, and that all its Beauty shall be marred: I say,

ſay, if vain Perſons would ſometimes think of theſe things, and behold themſelves now and then in this Glaſs, how would it humble them, and make them leſs addicted to ſuch vain Imployment, and be more buſied in things of greateſt conſequence! This would turn their thoughts another way, and make them beſtow a little more pains to waſh away the Impurities of their Souls. Conſider what is written againſt thoſe who are guilty of this vanity and extravagance in Apparel and Ornaments. *Iſa.* 3. 16. and 17. *Moreover the Lord ſaith, becauſe the Daughters of* Sion *are haughty, and walk with ſtretched forth Necks and wanton Eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; Therefore the Lord will ſmite with a Scab, the Crown of the Head of the Daughters of* Sion, &c. And verſe 24. *It ſhall come to paſs, that inſtead of ſweet ſmell, there ſhall be ſtink; and inſtead of a Girdle, a Rent; and inſtead of well ſet Hair, Baldneſs; and inſtead of a Stomacher, a girding of Sackcloth, and Burning inſtead of Beauty.*

Thirdly,

3. *Time to be redeemed from eating and drinking.*

Thirdly, Redeem time from eating and drinking, from pampering the Body: Spend no more of your time that way than what is fit. Make not your Belly your God; eat and drink that you may live, that you may be able to perform the necessary actions of life; but do not live so as if you had nothing to do, but to eat and drink, *and to make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof.* Live soberly at all times, and use abstinence and fasting sometimes. Take not too great delight in gratifying your Palate and Appetite. God alloweth you the free and liberal use of his good Creatures, for your health and refreshment; but not to abuse them to gluttony and drunkenness, or any other sort of excess and extravagance. It is fit to use all those perishing things with great moderation; because,

First, They are apt to be a great Snare, and to lead Men to a great deal of Sin and Folly. The Apostle rekons up first *Gluttony and Drunkenness*, and then *Chambering and Wantonness*, &c. *Rom.* 13. 13. *Intemperance* being as the Mother of the rest. It is often the occasion

occasion and cause of them. The Sin of *Sodom* was occasioned by *their fulness of Bread, and abundance of Idleness.* Ezek. 16. 49.

Secondly, This renders the Soul unactive, and unfit for those excercises, which chiefly belong to it to perform. The Spirits are thereby made dull and sleepy, and incapable to be attentive and serious. *Watch and be sober* must go together. If we are not sober and temperate, we are not fit to Watch. And therefore our Saviour saith, *Luke* 21. 34. *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares.* So long as the Soul lodgeth in the Body, it depends much upon the state and temper of it, so that the Body, when it is clogg'd and oppressed with meat, or drowned with drink, is a very unfit Tool for the Soul to manage; yea thereby the Soul is, as it were, chained up, and cannot freely move and act. So we see that Men at such times, when they are guilty of excess and intemperance, are rash and imprudent in their Counsels and Resolutions, whereof they are ashamed afterwards when they grow sober.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The uncertainty of these delights of Sense should dispose us sometimes to deny our selves, and not to enslave our selves unto them, and come under the tyranny of a curious and dainty Palate. A change in our outward estate will be the less surprising to us, when in time of plenty we now and then restrain and deny our selves in those pleasures, which we have the opportunity to pursue in our eating and drinking.

4. *Time to be redeemed from Gaming.*

Fourthly, Redeem time from Gaming and Recreations. Sometimes they are very needful to the Body, for your health, and to render you more fit for action and business. But you must take care that your Divertisements and Recreations be,

First, innocent and lawful, and not contrary to the Rules and Principles of Christianity; that they be not hurtful to your selves or others, nor scandalous and offensive. Let them not be such as those of wicked Men, of whom *Solomon* speaks, *Prov.* 10. 23. to whom *it is a sport to do mischief*; and who *make a mock of sin*; whose delight and divertisement is, in saying

saying things that are wicked and profane, to the hurt and grief of one or other. The *Philistines* called for *Samson*, (when he was *their Prisoner*) *to make them sport*, Judg. 16. 25. The *Babylonians* required a Song and mirth of the poor Captive *Jews*, saying, *Sing us one of the Songs of* Sion, *Psal.* 137. 3. They made it a sport to insult and to triumph over others in their distress; they made themselves merry with the miseries of others.

2*dly*, Let your Divertisements and Recreations be used with moderation: give not your selves liberty to go beyond due bounds, neither as to time, nor yet as to the proportion of money you play for. Beware of falling into the Habit of Gaming; when *Plato* reproved a young Man very sharply for playing at Dice †, the young Gamester answered him, *Do you reprove me so much for so small a matter?* But said *Plato*, *Custom is no small matter.*

† Diog. Laert. in Platone.

There is unspeakable hurt and prejudice, that comes from suffering your selves to be too far carried away by the fancy and humour of Gaming, and following

lowing your Sports and Paſtimes. This does inſenſibly expoſe you to the danger of Poverty, as *Solomon* tells us. *He that loveth Pleaſure ſhall be a poor Man, Prov.* 21. 17. This renders you unfit for all Sacred and ſerious Performances, the mind being thereby filled with the images and reflections of what you ſaid and heard, of what you and others did at your Games: Your hopes and your fears, your joys and your uneaſineſs, your victories and loſſes, your ſurpriſes and diſappointments, your little debates and contentions, your indignation and reſentments, and a great many other things, too common at Gaming, ſo diſtract and fill your mind for a great while afterwards, that when you would be ſerious, and employ your ſelves to better purpoſe, you cannot bring your minds to that fixedneſs and ſtayedneſs that is neceſſary; you remain, as it were, drunk with your Paſtimes and Divertiſements; your thoughts reel to and fro, and cannot ſettle; you have a great deſire of returning again to your Recreations, that you may gratifie your fancy, and may gain more profit, or praiſe and applauſe.

That

That you may not fall under thoſe inconveniencies, your beſt way is to keep out of ſuch Company as makes Gaming their Buſineſs. And if at any time it be fit for you to indulge your ſelves a little in Gaming, it will not be amiſs that you ſet Bounds to your ſelves; both as to your time, how long to play; and as to the quantity of money you intend to play for; that you may not either in one or t'other reſpect, exceed thoſe limits which Chriſtian Prudence requires. It is very adviſable either not at all to play for money (which oft-times occaſions great ſtrivings and quarrellings, or great uneaſineſs of thought;) or to play for ſo very little as may be next to nothing, which may not afterwards occaſion any uneaſie reflections and diſſatisfaction of mind. And if at any time you be diſpoſed, and find it expedient to play for a little more than ordinary, (ſtill obſerving the Rules of diſcretion and Chriſtian Prudence) it would not be unfit to make it a condition in your Game, that the Winner apply what he gains to ſome charitable uſe, which you may either then expreſly determine, or you may reſolve to give the

money which shall be gained, to some discreet and charitable Person, who will be sure to bestow it to good purpose. As this would afford a great pleasure and joy to those who reap some fruit and benefit by your Recreation and Pastime; so it would afford your selves a greater delight and satisfaction, than otherwise you could expect by your Divertisements. And besides, this would prevent covetous desires, and other evil passions and dispositions, which usually attend those who game only, or chiefly, for profit and advantage.

As for those who are apt in gaming to be transported into violent passion, and to break out into indecent heats, it is necessary for such Persons to give over all such Divertisements, as use to cause this excessive fermentation of their Spirits, and which put them upon the fret. Or if at any time they think good to play at some Game, they ought to do it in the presence of those, who by their Authority are able to restrain them from every thing that is indecent and extravagant, that by degrees they may get the Victory over themselves, and may habituate themselves

ſelves to mildneſs and gentleneſs of Spirit, and may be preſerved from all the ſad conſequences of unruly paſſions.

5. Time to be redeemed from Viſiting.

Fifthly, Redeem time from Viſiting. Too many throw away their time in making vain and unneceſſary Viſits, employing themſelves on theſe occaſions in vain and impertinent chat, and *fooliſh talking and jeſting, which are not convenient*; in making their Obſervations, and paſſing their Cenſures upon the Words and Actions, the Modes and Cuſtoms of others; in ſlandering and back-biting; in ſowing vain and falſe Reports; in cauſing Jealouſies and Contentions, and doing other ſuch like bad Offices.

Viſiting is either good or bad, according as it is managed. In ſome caſes it is very fit and neceſſary to viſit your Friends and Neighbours, to keep up thereby a friendly and neighbourly Correſpondence, to offer your help and ſervice to them when there is need of it, to ſympathize with them when they are in any ſort of trouble or diſtreſs, and to aſſiſt them to bear their

burdens, whether of Body, or Mind, or outward Eſtate.

Sometimes the Laws of Civility and Diſcretion require, that you viſit thoſe who have witneſſed great Civility and Reſpect towards you. Sometimes the good Offices and generous Favours of ſome Perſons to you, require that you ſhould expreſs your grateful ſenſe of their kindneſs and generoſity, by all poſſible inſtances of affection and eſteem, and particularly by viſiting of them now and then, which is a very eaſie and a ſmall return for thoſe Obligations they have laid upon you.

You muſt beware of viſiting or frequenting the company of thoſe who are very lewd and wicked, by whoſe converſation you are in great danger of being corrupted, whoſe example is ready to infect you. When you ſee a Houſe marked for the Plague, you are careful not to go into it, you keep your ſelves at a good diſtance from it, that you may not run the hazard of infection. The Love which you have for life makes you do all you can to preſerve it. Ought you not then to be as careful to keep out of the company of prophane

prophane perſons, whoſe *Throat is an open Sepulchre*, whoſe *Mouths are full of Blaſphemy and Curſing*, whoſe Breath is very infectious, whoſe Words and Actions are full of moſt deadly Poiſon, whereby your Souls are in danger of being corrupted and deſtroyed for ever? *Enter not into the path of the wicked*, ſaith *Solomon*, *and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away*, Prov. 4. 14, 15. And *Chap.* 5. 8. He adviſeth young men to *remove their way far from the ſtrange woman, and not to come nigh the door of her Houſe.*

As you ought to avoid all ſorts of Debauched Company, ſo eſpecially of thoſe who are Mockers of Religion, who ſcoff at all that is called Sacred, or looks like ſerious. They who *ſit in the Seat of the Scornful*, are mentioned by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 1. as the chief of Sinners, the higheſt Rank of them. Such Perſons are Satan's principal Inſtruments and Miniſters: Their ſcoffs and flouts do unſpeakable miſchief to Religion. A great many, who have ſtood firm againſt Arguments and Perſwaſions, have proved too weak to hold out againſt the Impious Raillery,

and Prophane Jesting of such, whose business is, to turn the most serious things of Religion into Ridicule. You ought to beware of such Wretches, as the very pests of Mankind.

It is true, sometimes your necessary Affairs, and your Relation wherein you stand to some Persons, may make it your Duty to be often in the company of those who are very wicked, but then you ought to be, *First*, possessed with a great abhorrence of what is evil in them, and in no manner to approve their sin and folly. *Have no Communion with their unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*, Eph. 5. 11. Follow the Psalmist's Example, whose *Eyes ran down with Rivers of Tears, because they kept not God's Law*, Psal. 119. 136. Remember also how *Lot's Righteous Soul was vexed with the filthy Conversation of the wicked amongst whom he lived*, 2 Pet. 2. 9, 10. *Secondly*, You ought to make use of all favourable opportunities, to endeavour to make them better, and to rescue them from their evil ways and doings.

If you observe these things, you are not partakers with them in their Sins, and therefore God will not lay them

to

to your charge. But if you entertain unneceſſary Company, and hold a delightful Familiarity, with Perſons of a profligate Life, 'tis too certain a mark that your Religion goes not very deep. You cannot juſtly be ſuppoſed to have much love to God, if you take pleaſure in the Society of his profeſſed Enemies. *All Fleſh conſorteth*, ſaith the Son of *Sirach*, *according to kind, and a Man will cleave to his like. What Fellowſhip hath the Wolf with the Lamb? ſo the Sinner with the Godly?* Eccleſiaſticus 13. 16, 17.

If at any time Atheiſtical and Prophane Perſons follow after you, and thruſt themſelves into your Company, beware of them, and ſhake off their Society, unleſs you converſe with them with a deſign to reform them, and to bring them off from their evil Practices, and have ground to hope that you may do them good. But when after having tried twice or thrice to make them better, you find you only *caſt Pearls before Swine*, and that there is more danger of getting hurt by them, than of doing them good, it is fit that you deal roundly and plainly with them, and that you let them know,

that ſo long as they are no better, you deſire to be excuſed, if you do not keep company with them. Tho' plainneſs is very neceſſary in this caſe, yet it is fit that it be tempered with all the diſcretion and ſweetneſs that's poſſible, otherwiſe it may do more hurt than good. Endeavour to make ſuch Perſons ſenſible that you are only an Enemy to their Vices, and that as for their Perſons you will be always ready to do them all good Offices.

Secondly, As you ought carefully to avoid the company of thoſe who are Prophane and Atheiſtical Perſons, ſo it is your Intereſt, as well as Duty, to viſit thoſe who are good and Religious. *They who feared the Lord* (ſaith *Malachi, Chap.* 3. 16.) *ſpake often one to another.* When you have the opportunity of enjoying the company of ſuch Perſons, make the beſt uſe of it that you can. *Conſider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works*, Heb. 10. 24. *Exhort one another daily*, Heb. 3. 13. Admoniſh, comfort, and, in a friendly and loving manner, reprove one another, as there is need. Make uſe of one anothers Counſel and Advice, in any thing that is doubtful and difficult. By all diſcreet

diſcreet and prudent ways, endeavour to learn ſome good and uſeful thing from good and wiſe Perſons, with whom you have occaſion to converſe. *Counſel in the heart of a man*, ſaith *Solomon*, *is as deep waters*; *but a man of underſtanding draws it out*, Prov. 20. 5. *Counſel*, that is, a skill and dexterity to give good Advice and Counſel, and to talk of things which tend to make men wiſer and better. This *in the heart of a* wiſe *man is like deep waters*, that is, it makes no great noiſe (the wiſeſt men being alſo the modeſteſt) and is not come at without ſome pains, and ſome prudent Arts and Methods: *But a man of underſtanding draws it out*, that is, by diſcreet and ſeaſonable queſtions and other fit ways, he gives his wiſe Friend an opportunity to diſcourſe, to communicate his thoughts, and to diſcover his wiſdom and experience.

Beware leſt in good Company your Diſcourſe vaniſh into air and ſmoak; leſt it be too trifling, and about things vain and impertinent. *Let your words be ſeaſoned with ſalt, miniſtring grace to the hearers*, Col. 4. 6. Endeavour to receive benefit from the Society of

thoſe who are good and wiſe, and to do them good, ſo far as you can, by your Society. *As every Man hath received the Gift*, ſaith St. *Peter*, *even ſo Miniſter the ſame one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 10.

It is true, it is not only lawful, but ſometimes very convenient and neceſſary, when virtuous and excellent Perſons meet together, that they recreate and divert themſelves a little by chearfulneſs and innocent mirth, that thereby their minds may be made more fit for ſerious and ſacred things. Such is the ſtate and condition of Man, while in the body, that his Soul cannot be always employed about thoſe things which are of a Divine and Spiritual Nature: This vigour and ſtrength of Soul is not, perhaps, attained to by any on this ſide the Grave. However, our care muſt be, that the bent and inclination of our Hearts be toward thoſe things that are good and uſeful. This muſt be our buſineſs, our way, and courſe, *to be good*, and *to do good*: And as for our Recreations and Divertiſements, they muſt only be ſubſervient to the other.

Sixtbly,

Sixthly, Redeem time from your ordinary cares and worldly busines, that you may do some great good for the glory of God, and benefit of Mankind.

6. Time to be redeemed from worldly Businesses.

In the ordinary course of your Lives you must mind the businesses of your Calling, according to your settled and usual Method: But then you are still to remember, to let the concerns of your Soul take place and be preferred. *First seek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*, Mat. 6. 33.

At some times it is fit to deny your selves in the affairs and concerns of this Life, to leave off your ordinary work and labour, when your great Lord and Master affords you some extraordinary opportunity for doing good to your Christian Brother, or to your own Souls: Then you must sell things of lesser value, that you may buy time for doing that which will make you rich in the true Riches; that you may edifie your Brother, and build up your selves in true Virtue.

The great matter is to know when you are to do so. You must not every time when a sudden thought ariseth in your

your mind, moving you to leave your Plough, or your Trade and Calling, and to give up your ſelves to ſome Acts of Religion and Devotion; you muſt not, I ſay, preſently ſet on this the ſtamp or ſeal of a Divine Inſpiration, and a Call from Heaven. This, if not taken heed to, may lead you into great miſtakes and errours, and very dangerous deluſions. Sometimes Melancholly, or other bodily Diſtempers, may give occaſion to a great many warm fancies and imaginations: Therefore you are not to follow thoſe private motions and inclinations, if you are not ſome other way determined thereto, by ſome concurring evidence of the hand of God. For Example, if, when you are moved in your own mind to do ſome very good and pious work, there happen about the ſame time an outward Call to do the ſame thing, you may conclude there is ſomewhat extraordinary in this to determine you. By an outward Call, I do not mean any extraordinary Voice from Heaven: That's not to be expected; but a Call by ſome good, wiſe, and diſcreet Perſon, who unexpectedly deſires and invites you to do that, which

which before his ſpeaking of it to you, you found your own heart moved and inclined to. In which caſe you have a very mighty encouragement, both from the goodneſs and uſefulneſs of the thing it ſelf, and from the Call and invitation which you have had from another, of whoſe Wiſdom and Piety you are ſufficiently aſſured. Tho' there be no more but this Call from Man, it is of great weight to move you, and to determine you in this manner to redeem your time from your ordinary labour, when there is ſome extraordinary occaſion of doing ſomewhat for the honour of God, or the good of Men. Thus if at any time you are invited to comfort one that is in any great trouble of Body or Mind, or in any other great diſtreſs and affliction; if there be any thing in your power to do for the comfort and encouragement of ſuch a Perſon, you ought to ſhew your readineſs to do your utmoſt for his help and ſupport. You know not but the Lord may make uſe of you (however weak and unfit you may think your ſelves) to ſerve the deſigns of his Mercy and Love. Likewiſe, if you are called to reconcile

cile those that are at variance; to see if you can awaken a Person from his sin and folly, especially when the Lord's hand is upon him; to give your Counsel and Advice in some extraordinary case, where it is judged needful for you so to do: In these and the like cases you ought chearfully to Sacrifice your private gain and advantage, and to let your lesser cares give place to those of a more publick and considerable Nature.

These things you are only to do, so far as the necessity of your own occasions will permit. They who are settled in a Calling, and have a Family, are under a very strict obligation to take care of their Family, and to mind their Calling and Employment; they must not neglect those necessary Duties which God hath given them to do in their several stations. The Scripture accounts them *worse than Infidels, who provide not for their House, and those of their own Family.* But if the Circumstances of your affairs will permit you to comply with the Opportunities of performing some eminent acts of Piety and Zeal, you ought not to neglect them: God will not fail

fail plentifully to reward your Love to him, and your Zeal for his Glory. Tho' a great many cannot ſpare much time from their Worldly Buſineſs, for extraordinary Exerciſes of Piety and Charity; yet there are none, who may not redeem ſome time from their Buſineſs, by lifting up their Hearts, now and then, unto God, by ſhort and fervent Ejaculatory Prayers or Thankſgivings, by earneſt deſires and breathings, by humble Groans and ſecret Sighs, by ſerious Acts of Adoration, by frequent Acts of Love, of Hope, of Truſt and Confidence, and of Reſignation to the divine Will. There is great neceſſity for ſuch ſhort and fervent Acts of Devotion ſometimes, amidſt your affairs and buſineſs, conſidering the doubts and difficulties, the hazards and dangers, and the ſnares and temptations, which you are often expoſed to, as alſo the many unexpected and kind providences you meet with, when you are employed in the Duties of your Calling. By obſerving this Courſe, you do not hinder or interrupt your Buſineſs; on the contrary, this is

Short and fervent Ejaculations, even in Time of Buſineſs, recommended.

the

the readieſt way to do it ſucceſsfully, and moſt to your own comfort and ſatisfaction. We ſee what *Nehemiah* did, when he waited upon *Artaxerxes*, as his Cup-bearer: The King having ſaid unto him, *Neh.* 2. 4. *For what doſt thou make Requeſt*, 'tis added, *So I pray'd to the God of Heaven.* He knew how great need he had of God's Direction and Aſſiſtance, and therefore, by a ſecret fervent Prayer, or Ejaculation, he lifted up his Heart unto the Lord; And the Lord heard him, and both aſſiſted him to preſent his Petition to the King, and inclined the King's Heart to grant his Requeſt? *v.* 8.

Amongſt other Advantages which attend this Religious Courſe, there is this; thereby you keep alive in your Hearts that ſacred Fire, which was kindled in the time of your more ſolemn Devotions. This is the way *to have your Converſation in Heaven, to walk with God, and to be continually with him*; this is to live like Citizens of the new *Jeruſalem*, like Men whoſe Hearts are in Heaven, whoſe Treaſure is there, and whoſe Love is fixt and ſettled on God and upon divine things.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, Redeem your time from idleneſs, and an uſeleſs way of living in the World. A great many do not waſte much time in ſleep, in dreſſing and adorning of their Bodies, in eating and in drinking, in gaming, or in viſiting, and yet they waſte their time: But how? In doing nothing, in entertaining themſelves with the vain imaginations of their fooliſh minds, feeding on the Wind, purſuing dreams, and catching at ſhadows, building Caſtles in the Air, and ſporting themſelves with their own vain conceits and fooliſh fancies. *Their Eyes are*, as *Solomon* tells us, *in the ends of the Earth*, Prov. 17. 24. They mind thoſe things moſt which concern them leaſt. They buſie themſelves about what others ſay and do, but do nothing themſelves to any good purpoſe. Some Men are full of vain and uſeleſs contrivances, wherewith they do indeed buſie themſelves: But to what end? When all their deſigns and vain contrivances are accompliſhed, they are but as ſo many Spiders Webs, only fit to catch flyes. This is to be buſie in Trifles, to be employed in doing as good as nothing.

7. Time to be redeemed from Idleneſs.

nothing. Thus there be ſome who purſue a ſtudious Life night and day, with a wonderful diligence; but their ſtudies being only in impertinent Books, and about deſigns of no uſe, or perhaps of very bad uſe, they gain nothing thereby; yea ſo far are they from reaping any benefit by their great pains and labour, that they are unſpeakable loſers; they loſe their time, and ſometimes they loſe their Wealth, and their Health, if not their Reaſon and Underſtanding.

Conſider, *firſt*, how unworthy this ſort of Life is of Men and of Chriſtians? God hath made you to be uſeful, to glorifie him, to do good in the World, to become daily more and more holy and religious, *to grow in grace, and to perfect holineſs in his fear*; and not to be like an uſeleſs Log, or an inſignificant Cypher; not to be barren and unfruitful in his Vineyard. Strive therefore to live up to the end and deſign of your being in the World, to improve your ſelves in Piety and Virtue, to do ſomewhat that may be of real advantage to the Souls and Bodies of others.

Secondly,

Secondly, Conſider how dangerous a thing it is to live an idle, vain, and unuſeful life. God hath promiſed Men his protection, only when they are in the way of their Calling, when they employ themſelves in that ſtate of life, wherein by his Providence he hath ſettled them in the World. So the Pſalmiſt inſtructs us, *Pſal.* 91. 11. *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*; that is, in all honeſt and lawful undertakings, and in all actions that belong to your Calling. So that if you are idle, and give up your ſelves to a lazy and uſeleſs manner of living in the World, doing nothing that's profitable to your ſelves or others, you put your ſelves out of God's protection, and thereby you give the Devil advantage over you, and you lay your ſelves open to all his Temptations. When was it that *David* fell into thoſe two foul Sins of Adultery and Murther? Was it not, when he yielded, for a ſhort time, to eaſe, and liv'd idly at home? And if ſo excellent and holy a Perſon, was ſo ſoon corrupted by Eaſe and Idleneſs, have you not great Reaſon to avoid this Vice, which is deſervedly called,

The

The Mother of all Evils, and the Step-Dame of all Virtues?

Thirdly, Conſider that the end of this idle and uſeleſs life is very ſad. *Caſt the unprofitable Servent into utter darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, Math.* 25. 30. Not only ſhall wicked Servants be caſt into utter darkneſs, but alſo unprofitable Servants, *who hide their Talents in a Napkin*; that is, who do not employ to any good purpoſe thoſe Gifts which God beſtows upon them, *who ſtand idle all the day long in the Vineyard.*

8. *Time to be redeemed in ſacred performances, by doing them in the beſt manner.*

Eighthly, Redeem time in your ſacred and religious Duties, and Performances, by endeavouring to do them in the beſt and perfecteſt manner you can. When you read, and pray, and meditate, and examine your ſelves, and hear the word of God preached, and ſing his praiſes, and partake of the Holy Sacrament, and perform other acts of Religion and Piety, in a lifeleſs, dull, unconcerned and formal manner, you loſe your time; and therefore when by due reflection upon your ways, you find that you do ſo,

ſo, endeavour afterwards to redeem it, by greater watchfulneſs and ſeriouſneſs; otherwiſe you may go on a great while in a courſe of Devotion to very little purpoſe, if you do not ſtir up your ſelves to do the beſt that's in your power to do, by God's help.

Thus when you find that you have read the Word of God in a careleſs and negligent manner, without conſidering whoſe Word it is, and for what end it is written, and without thoſe diſpoſitions of mind that are neceſſary; you muſt afterwards endeavour to redeem the time, by being more careful to read that Sacred Book with greater Reverence and Seriouſneſs, and with greater Pleaſure and Delight. Pray to God more heartily, for the direction and aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit. Meditate more attentively on what you read, and lay it up in your hearts, that it may be always in a readineſs for your uſe, as the rule of your lives.

If you find that you have loſt your time in Prayer, by not making your Addreſſes to God with a deep humility and reverence, with unfeigned Faith, and fervent Love, and with great

great earneſtneſs, ſincerity, and importunity; endeavour afterwards to pray with all poſſible humility and reverence, with greater faith and confidence, and with a mighty earneſtneſs and fervency of Spirit: Study to have your Souls poſſeſſed with a deeper ſenſe of your wants and neceſſities, that you may beg ſupplies of all needful things from him who can help you to the utmoſt. Be more ſenſible of the greatneſs of your ſins, and of the many hainous aggravations that attend them, that you may make humble confeſſion of them with true ſorrow and contrition. Conſider the danger to which your Hypocriſie, or Formality and Lukewarmneſs in Religious Duties do expoſe you, that you may with great integrity and uprightneſs of Soul, make your Addreſſes to *the Searcher of Hearts, and Tryer of the Reins*, who takes pleaſure in the hearty and chearful ſervices of thoſe who draw near unto him. Be poſſeſſed with more lively impreſſions of the Divine Power and Greatneſs, of the Juſtice, Holineſs, Goodneſs, Mercy, and Faithfulneſs of God, that the ſenſe thereof may make you adore him, and call upon him in ſuch a manner

manner as is ſuitable to ſo Glorious a Majeſty.

If you find that the time you have ſet apart for Self-Examination has been loſt, by a negligent performance of this Duty, by your not being in good earneſt, when you pretended to call your ſelves to an account: Endeavour to redeem the time, by ſearching your hearts, and enquiring into your ways with greater care and exactneſs. Examine and try your ſelves, as in the ſight of God, as Men that are in good earneſt to ſave their Souls from Everlaſting Condemnation. Deal impartially with your ſelves; do not extenuate your own faults, but aggravate them by all juſt and fit conſiderations: Endeavour to be deeply touch'd with hearty Contrition and real Grief and Sorrow for them; let your Repentance in all regards be more ſincere, and unfeigned, and your purpoſes and Reſolutions more ſtrong and ſteady.

If you find that you have reflected on God's Mercies and Favours to you, without that grateful ſenſe which you ought to have had thereof, and without making ſuitable returns, ſo far as you

you were able by his Grace, for his great and undeſerved goodneſs; endeavour afterwards to employ your thoughts on ſo delightful a ſubject, as is the Divine Love and Goodneſs, with greater pleaſure, and with a more lively ſenſe thereof than you have been wont. Let the conſideration of the love and goodneſs of God, powerfully move you, and prevail with you to do ſomewhat which may teſtifie the reality of your gratitude, ſomewhat that may be of real benefit to the Souls or Bodies of others.

If you find that you have been very formal and careleſs in performing what relates to the publick Worſhip, endeavour to redeem the time, by being more ſincere and devout. For Example, if you have heard the Word of God read and preached, in a trifling and unconcerned manner, without thoſe diſpoſitions of mind which were requiſite in a Chriſtian Hearer, and in an humble Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt; if you have attended on ſuch occaſions, more out of compliance with Cuſtom, and the Example of others, than out of Conſcience, and from Principles of true Religion and Devotion: Conſider that this

this is to loſe time, and, under an appearance of Religion, to remain without any thing of it in reality. You muſt therefore afterwards endeavour to hear the Word of God in another manner, to wit, as the Law and Rule of your Lives, as that which is given you of God to make you wiſe and good, and to fit you for everlaſting Happineſs and Glory; you muſt, *as new born Babes, deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that your Souls may grow thereby.* You muſt hear it with great reverence and attention, and with humble and tractable minds; you muſt ſtudy to have it ingrafted in your Hearts, that it may abide there as a Scion in a ſtock, and may grow and bear fruit unto everlaſting life. You muſt reflect on what you hear; when you leave the Church, you muſt not lay aſide all further thinking on what has been read or preached to you; you are to talk a little with your own hearts about thoſe things, and to call to mind any thing you heard, which tends to make you wiſer and better: Endeavour to have it deeply imprinted on your Souls, that it may prove unto

you *the Power of God unto Salvation, the ſavour of life unto life.*

If you find that you have been too often guilty of ſinging the Praiſes of God with your mouths only, without any melody in your Hearts, without any real ſenſe of the greatneſs and power, of the kindneſs and love, of the patience and long-ſuffering, of the truth and faithfulneſs of him whom you praiſe and celebrate: Endeavour to be more devout and ſerious in that part of Worſhip; ſing unto God, not only with your Voice, but with your Heart, which is the chief thing that God looks to. Study to raiſe your Souls to him, as well as to lift up your Voices, when you ſing his praiſes. Stir up all within you to bleſs his holy Name, *who forgiveth all your Iniquities, and healeth all your diſeaſes, who crowneth you with loving kindneſs and tender mercies*, who prevents you every Morning, and follows you all the day long, with many ſignal inſtances of his Fatherly care and love, giving you richly all things to enjoy for life and godlineſs.

If you find that you joyn in the Publick Prayers without any due Senſe of God

God upon your Souls, and without any real impreſſion of thoſe things to which you ſay *Amen*; if you find that you repeat ſome words as do others, but in the mean time your minds are buſie in purſuing ſhadows, in thinking of your Trades, your Sports and Paſtimes, *&c.* be aſhamed that you do thus loſe your precious time, that you are guilty of ſuch trifling in the moſt ſerious and ſacred action: Endeavour to be more affected with a right ſenſe about what you do, that you may offer up unto God *the Sacrifices of broken and contrite Hearts*, that you may *pour out your Hearts before him*, and may worſhip him with all your Soul and Mind. Bid farewel to your Worldly Cares, and to your Pleaſures and Vanities, when you come into his preſence, to pay your homage to him. Serve him with your beſt affections, with the ſtrength and vigour of your deſires, and with all your power and might. If you do this, you may then expect, with great aſſurance and confidence, that God will give ear unto you, and *ſatisfie your longing Souls with good things*, he will make you *taſte and ſee how good he is*. But if you pray without

being in good earneſt, your Sacrifices will be an abomination to him, he will not regard your Prayers, nor take any notice of you: *He will anſwer you according to the multitude of your Idols.*

If you find that you loſe time by your communicating in a careleſs and formal manner, without conſidering the end and deſign of that holy Inſtitution, and without endeavouring to prepare your ſelves as you ought to do, that you may eat and drink worthily at the Table of the Lord; ſtudy to redeem this loſs, by partaking of this Sacrament for the time to come in a more devout and religious manner: Be careful to approach with greater love and gratitude unto the Table of your Lord, who not only allows you to come, but kindly and lovingly invites and encourages you to do ſo. Come with your Souls burning with love to him who dyed for you, and who appointed you this Sacrament, that therein you might remember his wonderful love, and his aſtoniſhing compaſſion and mercy, which he hath teſtified in laying down his life for ſinners, that he might purchaſe to them everlaſting

lasting Life and Glory, even to as many as repent and believe the Gospel. Come with your Hearts deeply wounded and pierced with sorrow for your sins and follies, which were the cause of so shameful, so painful, and so cursed a death to your dearest Lord and Saviour. Come with your Souls full of sincere and hearty purposes and resolutions of being new Creatures, not to live any more unto your selves, or unto the World, but to him who dyed for you. Come with your Souls likewise enlarged with thoughts of kindness, and unfeigned Charity to all Men, with your minds delivered from all bitterness and wrath, from all malice and envy, that you may eat and drink at this Feast of Love, with sutable dispositions of universal Love and Charity. Come with a great desire to obtain strength from *the God of your Salvation*, that you may be able *to fight the good fight of Faith*, and may at last *lay hold on Eternal Life.*

In this manner you ought to endeavour to redeem the time, by doubling your care and diligence in all those Duties of Religion, in the performance

whereof you have been formerly faulty and defective.

Thus you are to do likewiſe in every other Action which you perform to the glory of God. When you find that you have been too formal and careleſs in what you have done and ſaid for God; for Example, in admoniſhing others, in inſtructing them, in reproving them, in comforting them, *&c.* endeavour to redeem time, by doing thoſe things with greater ſincerity and zeal, with a more pure regard to the Glory of God, with a greater deſire to approve your ſelves unto him, who gives you the opportunity of doing ſomewhat for his Honour, and with greater Charity to the Souls of Men.

Depend on God for a Bleſſing in all your endeavours, beg of him that he would direct and aſſiſt you to do that which is good and well pleaſing unto him; and that he would ſo diſpoſe the hearts of thoſe whom you admoniſh, inſtruct, reprove, or comfort, that what you ſpeak to them may not be loſt, but may have the deſired effect, for the glory of God, and their happineſs and welfare.

From

From what hath been ſaid, you may ſee how you ought to redeem your time: The next thing which I propoſed to ſpeak to, was, to ſuggeſt to you ſome Conſiderations to excite you to do ſo.

Some Motives to excite you to do theſe things.

First, Conſider how ſhort your time is. Your life is compared to a *Vapour, which appears for a little time, and then vaniſheth away*, Jam. 4. 14. It makes a little ſhew and appearance for a while, and then it is gone. It is compared to a *Poſt*, to the *Swift Ships*, and to the *Eagle that haſteth to the Prey*, Job 9. 25, 26. And to the *Wind*, and to a *Weaver's ſhuttle*, Job 7. 6, 7. All which Compariſons ſerve to expreſs how ſhort and ſwift our time is, how ſuddenly it flies away and is gone. *Man that is born of a Woman* (ſaith Job, Chap. 14. 1.) *is of few days.* And Jacob, (when he was a great deal older than Men live to be now, even 130 years old) told *Pharaoh*, ſaying, *Few* 1. *Motive, from the ſhortneſs of your Time.*

and evil have the days of the years of my life been. What are 40, or 60, or 80 years, when a Man lives ſo long, and looks back upon them all? They appear to him but like a *Shadow*, or as a *Dream*, or like a *Tale that is told.* Ought not this to move you to be good Husbands of your ſhort time? If it were in your own power to diſpoſe of it, according to your own humour and fancy, you might then be pardoned to delay your great Work and Buſineſs till you thought good: But now that it is not in your power to lengthen out your time one Minute, what a madneſs is it for you to put off and neglect your greateſt and chiefeſt Concern? Therefore be ſo wiſe, as to make good uſe of your preſent opportunities and occaſions of doing good, that you may *work out your Salvation with fear and trembling*, and may *make your calling and your Election ſure. Work while the day laſts, for the night cometh wherein you cannot work.*

If a Man who is guilty of Treaſon, or Rebellion againſt his Prince, or of any other great Crime which deſerves death, were allowed a few days to ſue out his Pardon, that he might ſecure his

his Life and Eſtate, would he not improve with great care and diligence that little time? To be ſure he would not loſe one moment of it: And tho' perhaps at other times, he was wont to give up himſelf to his pleaſures and paſtimes, and to mind little elſe, but the gratifying his Luſts and Paſſions, and his Vanity and Folly; yet now that his Life and Fortune lie at the ſtake, you ſhould ſee ſuch a man changed in a moment: You ſhould ſee him, with great application of mind, with the utmoſt diligence imploying his time, running from place to place, from one perſon to another, according as his great and important buſineſs and concern required. How readily would ſuch a Perſon redeem his time, not only from Idleneſs, from Gaming, from impertinent Viſits, and from dreſſing and adorning of his Body, and the like, but even from eating and drinking, and from his reſt and repoſe in the night? The deſire of preſerving his life would ſo fill his thoughts, as to make him forget almoſt every thing elſe. What would you think or ſay, if you ſhould ſee a man in ſuch circumſtances wholly unconcerned and

careleſs, ſpending his time in Gaming, or Idleneſs, in making impertinent Viſits, in rioting and drinking, and the like, and doing nothing at all to obtain his pardon, and to ſecure his life and fortune? Doubtleſs you would look upon ſuch a man as void of common underſtanding, fit only for *Bedlam*, or not worthy to live, who knew no better to make uſe of his ſhort time, to preſerve his life, which Nature teacheth all Men to do, by all honeſt and lawful means.

It is eaſie for you to make application of all this to your ſelves. You are by your Sins Enemies to God, Rebels againſt your Lord and King, whereby you are in danger of everlaſting death and deſtruction. But God in his infinite mercy gives you time to ſue out your Pardon, which he offers you upon the moſt juſt and reaſonable conditions; only *believe* and *repent*, and you ſhall be ſaved; he will have mercy upon you, and blot out your iniquities. Be therefore ſo wiſe, as to husband well this ſhort time, which God beſtows on you for this purpoſe: Redeem it as much as you can, from all vain and unneceſſary things, that

that you may obtain forgiveneſs of Sins, and the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, to enable you afterwards to walk in newneſs of life.

But if inſtead of minding this great and important concern of your Souls, you give up your ſelves to ſin and folly, and indulge your ſelves in your mad and wicked practices, and thereby provoke God yet more and more againſt you, how juſt will your Judgment and Condemnation be? if you will not be ſaved, if you will not turn to the Lord that you may live, if you will not believe, repent, and amend; what remains? you ſhall certainly dye, and be miſerable for ever. They that will not be happy, ſhall not be happy. *The wrath of God ſhall abide upon them.*

Secondly, Conſider that as your time is very ſhort, ſo it is moſt uncertain. What do you know whether your Sun ſhall decline leiſurely, or whether it may not go down ſuddenly, when you think it is not yet come to the Noon-tide of the Day? You are not ſure to live till you come to a good old Age. How many ſickneſſes and

2. *Motive, from the uncertainty of your Time.*

and diſtempers, and how many ſudden accidents are there in the way, which may ſhorten your day, and cauſe your Sun to ſet, when you think it ſhines with its greateſt force and luſtre? Sometimes a Candle is blown out by the Wind, or ſnuffe out undeſignedly, when it is not yet half burnt. And ſo the life of Man is often extinguiſhed by outward accidents, when by the courſe of Nature, it might have been prolonged much further.

How many come forth into the World, and give great appearances of making a very conſiderable figure in it, by their Wiſdom and Sagacity, their good Conduct, and Addreſs, their Excellent Parts and uſeful Learning, their Courage and Valour, their Charming Eloquence, and clear and diſtinct Reaſoning, or by their ſhining Piety and burning Zeal? But do not you ſee how ſuddenly they are gone? they are hurried away by death, and you neither ſee them nor hear of them any more.

There is nothing certain as to your time, but its ſhortneſs and uncertainty. Nothing can ſecure you againſt an unexpected blow by death, when God ſees

ſees fit to give charge to the King of Terrors to knock you down. Youth and ſtrength cannot do it; for how many die *when their Breaſts are full of milk, and their bones are moiſtened with marrow?* Too great abundance of Blood and Spirits doth ſometimes oppreſs and ſtifle the life of Man.

Wealth and Riches cannot ſecure you: How many great and wealthy men have been ſuddenly carried away as with a Flood, when their Coffers were full of Silver and Gold, when they had all that heart could wiſh? Even their Wealth proved the bait which allured idle, covetous, and deſperate Perſons, to break into their Houſes, and rob them, not only of their Treaſure, but of their Lives.

Greatneſs of Power and earthly Honour and Dignity, are not able to do it: Crowns and Scepters, Caſtles and Palaces, a wiſe Council, and great Armies, are not able to protect Princes, from the violent and deſperate attempts of Men, who are prodigal of their lives. How many of thoſe who have been moſt famous in the World for their Power and Greatneſs, have been very unexpectedly removed by a violent

violent and ſudden death? When they have been in their greateſt heighth, at the very top of Earthly Felicity, and full of the deepeſt Projects and Deſigns; when they made account to make the Earth, as it were, to tremble; to humble and to mortifie their Enemies, to enlarge their own Dominions, or to enſlave their Subjects, even then Death gave them a ſudden blow, and ſo there was an end of them and their deſigns together.

But may not Wiſdom and Underſtanding, great Learning, and Skill in various Arts and Sciences, do ſomewhat to ſecure Men from the ſudden blow of Death? No, all this cannot do it: We ſee even Wiſe Men ſuddenly and unexpectedly removed from us by Death, as well as others. In the midſt of their uſeful Studies, and excellent contrivances, and deſigns, the King of Terrors puts a ſtop to them, and in the twinkling of an Eye they are gone, and all their thoughts are laid aſleep. So vain a thing is Man, and even the wiſeſt Man; and ſo uncertain is his time.

Conſider that Death can enter by a thouſand doors. Every pore in your Body

Body is a Gate wide enough for Death to enter in at. Do not you ſee what a ſmall thing makes way for Death? The prick of a Thorn, or a Splinter of Wood does it ſometimes, by occaſioning a Fever, or a Gangrene. How quickly are ſome removed by violent and unexpected Diſtempers, and ſometimes on a ſudden are ſtruck dead, you cannot tell how? Have not ſome dyed through an exceſs of joy, and others through immoderate grief; ſome by exceſſive laughter, and others by too much mourning and weeping? Some have died with a fright or ſudden fear: ſome by the violence of their anger and wrath, and others by an exceſs of Love. How many have been killed with over much care, and too great watching? and others have occaſioned their own death by idleneſs, and too much ſleep: Some have killed themſelves with eating and drinking, and others have done it by too great abſtinence and faſting. Have not ſome died while they have been at Meals, by a Crumb, or a little Bone, or ſome ſuch very ſmall matter? When they were thinking to repair their ſtrength,

and

and to fit themſelves for going on with their buſineſs and work; that which they did to ſave and lengthen out their lives, did ſhorten them, and put an end to them. May not this inſtance alone ſhew you the great uncertainty of your time, and how neceſſary it is to redeem it?

But beſides all this, conſider that when you go abroad, you are in danger from innumerable accidents. You may be killed by the noiſome ſteams of the Earth, by ſome infectious quality in the Air, by the Beaſts of the Field, by the teeth of mad Dogs, by the horns of enraged Oxen, or by the heels of wild Horſes. You are likewiſe in danger from the winged Creatures, the leaſt of whom have Weapons ſufficient to deſtroy you, if God by his Power and Juſtice arm them againſt you.

Valer. Max. lib. 9. cap. 12.

How remarkable was the manner of the death of *Æſchylus*, an ancient Poet in *Sicily*, who as he ſate in a Sunny place without the Walls of the City, was killed by a Tortoiſe, which an Eagle let fall on his head.

And no leſs memorable is the Story which is mentioned in the Book of Martyrs, of one *Burton*, Bailiff of *Crowland*

land in *Linconſhire*, who pretending to be a Friend to the Reformation in King *Edward*'s time; after the King's death began to ſet up the Popiſh Maſs again, and would have beaten the Curate, if he had not complied with his deſign: But ſee how the Lord's hand overtook him; as he came riding from *Fenbank* one day, a Crow flying over his head, let fall her Excrements upon his face, the noiſom ſcent whereof ſo annoyed his ſtomach, that he never ceaſed vomiting till he came home: And after falling deadly ſick, would never receive any meat, but vomited ſtill, and complained of that ſtink, curſing the Crow that had poiſoned him; and in a few days he died.

Beſides the danger you are in from unreaſonable Creatures, are you not alſo ſometimes in hazard from Men, who are mad either through the diſtemper of their Brain, or through their violent Malice and Envy? *Let a Bear robbed of her Whelps* (ſaith *Solomon*) *meet a Man rather than a Fool in his folly*, Prov. 17. 12. And not only are your Lives in danger from unreaſonable Creatures and from Men, but likewiſe from the Spirits of Darkneſs, unleſs

unleſs reſtrained by the mighty Power of God. Theſe are Enemies of great Power, and of as great, yea greater Malice. But your heavenly Father keeps them as it were in chains, and ſets bounds to their rage and fury, that they cannot hurt you ſo much as in a hair of your head, without the Divine permiſſion.

But further; ſo uncertain is your time, that there is not a ſtone, nor a block in your way, but it may be an occaſion of your ſtumbling, and falling into the ſnares of Death. And ſometimes when there is no ſuch block in your way, you are not ſecure from danger: One foot may prove a ſtumbling-block to the other, and an occaſion of your falling into the hands of Death. When you walk in the ſtreets either for Buſineſs or Divertiſement, and have not the leaſt apprehenſion of any danger, even then Death may hang over your Heads: Every Tile on the Houſe-tops, may by its unexpected fall, as you paſs by, beat out your Brains, and ſo put an end to all your Thoughts and Motions.

And more than all this; in how great danger are your Lives from Fire, and

and from Water, from Heat and Cold, from Storms and Tempeſts, from Thunder and Lightning, and many other things, the ſtroke whereof you cannot prevent nor foreſee? God hath in ſtore the Sword, the Famine, and Peſtilence, and innumerable Judgments and Plagues, whereby he can cut you off, and ſhorten your Lives.

When you are in your houſes, and think your ſelves in ſafety, you know not but that Death is even there, and that your Grave is ready for you: By a ſudden Wind, by an Earthquake, or by a decay in the Foundation, or ſome other part of the Building, the Houſe may fall down about your ears, and prove your burying place.

So true is it what *Solomon* ſays, *Eccl.* 9. 12. *For Man alſo knoweth not his Time; as the Fiſhes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the Snare: So are the Sons of Men ſnared in an evil Time, when it falleth ſuddenly upon them.*

From all which you may conclude, that your time is the moſt uncertain thing in the World. Ought you not therefore to make good uſe of it while

it

it lasts, not knowing how soon and suddenly it may be at an end?

3. Motive, from the greatness and difficulty of the work you have to do.

Thirdly, Consider how great and difficult a work you have to do; a work that requires a great part of your time, and worthy of all your time. How hard is it to work out your Salvation, to make your Calling and Election sure; to strive to enter in at the strait Gate; to be born again; to be made new Creatures; to be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; to put off the works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light; to add to your faith, virtue,; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity? To have the image of God renewed in your Souls; to be made partakers of the Divine Nature, to escape the corruptions which are in the World through lust; to be conformed to the Example of your Blessed Lord and Master, in those Virtues wherein you ought to imitate him; to learn of him who

was

was meek and lowly; to go about as he did, doing good to the Souls and Bodies of Men; to be zealous for God; and holy as he who called you is holy in all manner of Converſation?

How great a work is it to overcome your ſelves? To become vile and baſe in your own eyes, to think meanly of your ſelves, and to be willing that others ſhould think ſo of you too; to be content with every ſtate and condition of life, wherein God does by his Providence place you; to bear wrongs and injuries with meekneſs and patience; not to be overcome with evil, but to overcome evil with good; to mortifie your ſinful deſires and ſenſual appetites; to crucifie the fleſh with the affections and luſts; to purifie your ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit; to cleanſe your Hearts from all manner of wickedneſs, that they may be fit Temples for the Spirit of God to dwell in; to govern your eyes, that you may not thereby betray your Souls into the hands of your Enemies; to govern your Lips, to take heed to your ways, that you offend not with your Tongue; to put away from you all lying, flattery, and diſſimulation, all evil ſpeaking, whiſpering, and backbiting,

all

all fooliſh talking and jeſting, which are not convenient; to be ſober and temperate in all things; to be juſt and ſincere in all your dealings, doing to others what you would have them do to you?

How great a work is it to overcome the World? to deſpiſe its Pomps and Vanities, not to be allured and charmed by its ſmiles, nor yet frighted and caſt down by its frowns; not to ſuffer your ſelves to be poſſeſſed with the love of Riches; to entertain juſt and fit opinions of the things of this World; to conſider them as vain, uncertain, and unſatisfactory enjoyments, which are not capable to make you happy, which are only ſo far to be deſired, as they are neceſſary in order to your accommodation and more eaſie ſubſiſtence in the World? How hard is it to overcome the temptations of earthly pleaſure and outward delights, and not to ſuffer your minds to be too far tranſported by the love of them; but to uſe even the moſt innocent pleaſures with great moderation, leſt they lead the Soul Captive, and render it unfit for the true pleaſures? How hard is it to live in the World as Pilgrims

and

and Strangers ought to do, to pass through this Wilderness without much regarding it, but fixing your eyes on the happy Land, the heavenly *Canaan*, which you ought to look on as your only Country? How hard is it to escape the danger of the evil Manners and Customs which are in the World? The many temptations which you have to vanity and folly, to pride and passion, to gluttony and drunkenness, to luxury and sensuality, and to other Vices, by the bad Examples of your Friends, Neighbours, and other Acquaintances?

How great and difficult a work is it to resist the Devil, to quench his fiery darts, to reject his suggestions, to discover his wiles and stratagems, to watch against all his assaults, and vigorously to oppose his temptations, that you may overcome him and triumph over him? Now, this is the work you have to do: *For we wrestle not* (saith the Apostle, *Eph.* 6. 12.) *against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* How hard and dangerous a Warfare must it needs be, that makes

makes it neceſſary for you *to take the whole Armour of God, that you may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done all, to ſtand*?

How hard a work is it to read, and hear, and meditate, to examine your ſelves, to pray to God, and to praiſe him, to partake of the holy Sacrament, and to perform all other Acts of Devotion and Piety, as you ought to do?

How great a work is it to love God above all things, to love him with all your Soul and Heart, and with all your ſtrength and might, and to keep your ſelves in the Love of God, that it may be in you a powerful Spring and Principle unto all good actions, that you may be thereby ſweetly conſtrained to do and to ſuffer whatever is his holy Will and Pleaſure?

Is it not a great work to perform aright all thoſe Duties which you are bound to do in your ſeveral relations and capacities? To inſtruct, to admoniſh, to reprove, and to comfort others, and to do every thing you can for the good of Mens Souls and Bodies? *Let no Man* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 10. 24.) *ſeek his own, but every Man anothers wealth.* And, *Chap.* 13. 5. *Charity*

Charity seeketh not its own, that is, not only its own; it seeketh not its own to the prejudice of another; but it endeavours to promote the happiness and welfare of others. The charitable Person hath an eye to the good and benefit of other Men, as well as his own gain and advantage.

And besides all this, you ought to have so much Zeal for the Glory of God, and the good of Souls, as to endeavour to do somewhat which may have a lasting effect and influence not only in the present time, but in the time to come: You ought to contrive by all means to propagate Religion, to do somewhat which may bear fruit for the honour of your Maker and Redeemer, when you are laid in the Grave.

From all which you may see what a great and difficult work you have to do in the World, and how great need you have to redeem time, and to lose as little of it as is possible. How necessary is it for you to begin your work betimes, and to be constant in the pursuit of it, *In the Morning to sow your Seed, and in the Evening not to with-*

hold your hand? What a madneſs is it to have your work to begin when your time is almoſt at an end, when there are but a few ſands in your Glaſs? You who have ſo long a Race to run, and ſo much bad Way to paſs through, and who are ſo weak, and have ſo little ſtrength to ſtir one foot, to do, or ſay, or think any thing that is good, have you not great need to ſet out in good time, and to continue unwearied in your courſe, all the day, that you may at laſt receive the glorious prize? Ought you not (*forgetting thoſe things that are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before*) *to preſs towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 3. 13, 14. Ariſe therefore from your ſloth and lazineſs, *and run and be not weary*; *and walk, and do not faint*. Pray to God to hold up your goings in his paths, that your footſteps may not ſlide, to ſtrengthen your weak hands, and confirm your feeble knees, to draw you that you may run after him, and follow him fully. Beg of him, that he would be at your right hand to direct

and

and defend you, that he would perfect his ſtrength in your weakneſs, and would give you in all things both to will and to do, according to his good pleaſure; that when you meet with enemies in your way, he would teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight; and that his Grace may be ſufficient for you.

Fourthly, Conſider that you muſt give an account of your time, how you ſpend and employ it. God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who is to come from Heaven very unexpectedly and ſuddenly, in a moſt dreadful and terrible manner, with Power and great Glory, in the Clouds of Heaven, in flaming fire, with ten thouſands of his holy Angels, with a ſhout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God. He ſhall ſend his Angels, and they ſhall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other. The Throne ſhall be ſet, and all Nations

4. Motive, from the Account you muſt give how you ſpend your Time.

ſhall be gathered before him. The Books ſhall be opened, and the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be brought to light; the counſels of the heart ſhall be made manifeſt; and every work ſhall be brought into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or bad. There ſhall be no need of Witneſſes againſt the guilty, nor of Racks and Tortures to extort their Confeſſions: Every Man's own Conſcience ſhall be inſtead of a thouſand Witneſſes. Then ſhall the Judge paſs Sentence on every Man according to his works. The righteous ſhall be abſolved, and ſhall receive the reward of everlaſting Life and Glory: They ſhall be made partakers of a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away, and of a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken. But the wicked ſhall be caſt into utter darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, where the Worm dieth not, and where the fire ſhall never be quenched: Where they ſhall continue for ever deprived of the Favour and Love of God, and expoſed to the inſupportable load of his anger and diſpleaſure.

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You profeſs to believe theſe things, and therefore ought you not ſo to live, and ſo to husband your time, that when the Judge cometh, he may not find you idle, nor doing ſuch things as are to his diſhonour?

You may by the following Similitude, conceive ſomewhat concerning the different thoughts of good and bad Men, upon ſuch a ſudden appearance of the Judge. Suppoſe a Prince going into a far Country, ſhould call together his Servants, appointing them ſeverally their work till his return (which he tells them will be unexpected) and promiſing great rewards of Houſes, and Lands, and honourable Employments, to the faithful and obedient Servants; but threatning ſevere puniſhments, and torments, and a terrible death, to the unfaithful and diſobedient. If after his departure ſome of the Servants mind their buſineſs, obſerving, as well as they can, what their Maſter required them to do: Others, without any regard to his Commands, take no thought of their buſineſs, but are idle, *and eat and drink with the drunken, and ſmite their fellow Servants*, and

both by their words and deeds dishonour their Lord. You may easily imagine how differently these Servants will be affected when he returns suddenly and unexpectedly. The good Servants will be glad and rejoyce at his coming, and will meet him with great chearfulness and confidence, as expecting the accomplishment of his Promises, and being conscious to themselves of having done their Duty honestly and faithfully, of having carried themselves, as they ought to have done, during his absence: But the naughty and wicked Servants, must needs be filled with shame and confusion upon the Coming of their Lord, so as not to be able to look him in the face; There is no other thing which they can do, but to endeavour to fly from his presence, that they may not fall under the weight of his terrible displeasure.

In this manner our Lord and Master Jesus, before he left the World, gave Rules and Commands to his Servants how to employ themselves, and what to do till his return. He promised Rewards to all who should believe and obey;

obey; and threatned the unbelievers, and the disobedient with heavy Punishments, and most dreadful Judgments. When he comes again in the great Day to judge the World, the godly shall meet him with great hope and assurance, of obtaining *the end of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Souls.* But the wicked and unbelievers shall be full of horrour and confusion, and shall cry, tho' in vain, to the Mountains to fall on them, to hide them from the face of their Judge, who will be a consuming Fire to all the workers of iniquity, and will in no wise clear the guilty.

Now do you desire heartily and sincerely to escape everlasting Condemnation, and to obtain a glorious Reward in the Day of your Accounts? Then you must study to redeem the time, and to make use of all opportunities of doing good: You must not be slothful in your great business, but *fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

You see how the Men of the World bestir themselves, when there is but a

ſmall appearance and probability of gain and advantage. The Merchants make uſe of every favourable opportunity to buy and ſell; they go early to Market, that they may not loſe a good occaſion; and yet after all, they may be, and are frequently diſappointed, and make a very bad bargain. But the Chriſtian, who redeems his time to buy Wiſdom, is ſure to find it. *They who ſeek me early, ſhall find me*, Prov. 8. 17.

The *Mariners* wait for a favourable Gale, a fair and ſeaſonable Wind, to go to Sea: And when it blows according to their wiſhes, they are ſure not to loſe one moment. Their deſire of gain, and their hopes of a proſperous Voyage, makes them venture. And yet after all, they may, and often do ſuffer ſhipwrack, and loſe their goods and their lives too. But the Chriſtian who redeems his time, is in no ſuch danger; he is ſure to arrive ſafely at the Harbour of everlaſting Reſt, after all the ſtorms and tempeſts, which he meets with in the boiſterous Sea of this World.

The

The *Husbandmen* wait for a good ſeaſon to Plough, and Sow, and to do all other things belonging to their Employment; and when the time is favourable, they are ſure to make uſe of it. The deſire and hopes they have of a Harveſt, of a fruitful Crop, quickens their endeavours, and excites their induſtry. And yet after all, they may be diſappointed. Their Corn may be drowned by violent Rains, or ſcorched and burnt up with violent Heat, or eaten up and conſumed by Inſects, Fowls, or Beaſts. But the Chriſtian who *ſows in tears, ſhall reap in joy*, Pſal. 126. 5, 6.

You ſee that Men, who run a Race, ſtrive with great earneſtneſs to gain the Prize, to obtain that, which oft-times is of no very great value. And yet ſome of thoſe who run come behind, and are diſappointed of their hopes. But the Chriſtian *runs not uncertainly*; he is ſure to *obtain not a corruptible Crown, but an incorruptible*, 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Again, you ſee that Men who beſiege a City or a Caſtle, wait for all advantages, and are ſure not to neglect

a favourable occaſion of making an Aſſault, and ſurpriſing the Enemy The hopes of getting rich Spoils, of gaining Honour and Renown, makes them reſolute and valiant. And yet it often happens, that they loſe their lives in the Attempt; or are taken Captive by thoſe whom they did hope to overcome and ſubdue. But he who *fights the good fight of Faith*, is ſure *to lay hold on eternal Life*. He who fights under Chriſt's Banner, and who has him for his Captain, is ſure to obtain the Victory over all his Enemies.

The Concluſion.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe with what is written by St. *Peter*, 2 *Epiſt. Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 10, 11, &c. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heaven ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth alſo, and the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up. Seeing then that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of Perſons ought you to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs; Looking for, and haſtening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein*

the

the Heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolved, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheleſs we, according to his promiſe, look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs. Wherefore (beloved) ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot, and blameleſs.

FINIS.

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ADVICE

TO

PARENTS.

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TO
CHILDREN.